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THE EUROPEAN CRISIS.

THE history of the negotiations which have arisen out of the great difficulty of the last four months, is already a lengthy business; and the various successive steps require to be remembered with some care. First, we had a public discovery of the bad feeling between France and Austria, by way of a New-year's present from Louis Napoleon to Europe. Down came the Funds from sea to sea; the revolution, always smouldering, began to glow through the ashes of its last ruinous explosion; everywhere began talk, anxiety, excitement, and preparation for war. The British Government took to mediating between the dissatisfied Powers, while the journals of both insulted each other, and while Napoleon hurried forward the marriage between his cousin and the daughter of Savoy. Lord Cowley having informed himself carefully of the nature of the situation and the views of France, was sent to Vienna to bring our mediation to some practical result. Meanwhile, Russia steps into the field with a proposal for a Congress. Europe breathes again. The Congress becomes everywhere the subject of speculation, and Great Britain, agreeing in the suggestion, proposes "four conditions" of its meeting, viz.:

1. Evacuation of the Roman States by foreign troops.
2. Reform of the administration of the Roman States.
3. Prevention of a probable war between Austria and Sardinia.
4. Provision of a substitute for the treaties between Austria and the States of Central Italy.

These conditions rested, of course, on the deeper and broader proposition that the Congress should accept the general settlement of 1815 as a basis for everything.

Well, the four conditions are accepted by the four great Powers—Russia, Prussia, France, and Austria; but Austria adds a demand that Sardinia shall disarm as a preliminary. This Great Britain declines to accede to, though offering, if Sardinia will disarm, to join France in guaranteeing her from Austrian attack for a certain time. Sardinia, in her turn, says "no" to the last offer; and the "difficulty" passes into a new phase. Austria proposes—drawing her last suggestion—a general disarmament. Great Britain accepts the proposal, and lays it before France. France accedes to it, but raises preliminary difficulties on the point whether the disarmament shall be immediate, or whether the Congress shall meet

first, and discuss the disarmament. Austria declares for the first plan, and Sardinia declines both, on the ground that she is not, as she ought to be, admitted to the Congress, which has been designed meanwhile, all along, as one to consist of the great Powers. On that last objection of Sardinia's, Great Britain's notion is a compromise,—that Sardinia shall be heard at the Congress, along with other Italian Powers, or even be a member of it, provided the influence of these last is allowed for.

Such is a brief condensed statement of the recent negotiations,

quence amongst us. The country is perfectly neutral; is in alliance with both France and Austria—kindly to Sardinia, without wishing her territory increased—kindly to all Italy, without wishing her revolutionised; in fact, disposed to see everything pass off as quietly as possible. What then prevents the maintenance of peace? There is the puzzling question. Nobody wants to attack anybody, but everybody is menacing everybody! "We disarm? Certainly!" says Austria. "Why, we are not armed!" says France. Little Sardinia, most pugnacious of all, comes out with a proposal more or less pacific, that she at least will prepare no more, if Austria will not.

And yet, with all this, nobody is satisfied—not the money interests—not Germany, not (as one sees through all their caution in Parliament) our own statesmen. It is obvious, that underground influences are more potent than these we see on the surface; that unpublished intentions, designs, ambitions, are really producing the uneasiness. The frankest commentator on the situation—Lord Derby—is evidently weary of the delays and evasions. He has one more proposal in petto, and then—Why, then, the Earl hints we shall have done all we can do, and had better take refuge in a dignified—and armed—neutrality. What this indicates is plain. The Premier thinks that we are being trifled with, more or less—that Powers which affect to be so pacific, yet will not take the preliminary steps towards peace, must be hypocritically hanging back with secret and sinister objects.

There is no reason why newspaper should affect that mightily over-scrupulous regard for everybody's feelings which the House of Commons displayed on Monday night. If there must be a war, let us prepare ourselves for clear, honest understanding of the rights and wrongs of it, or we shall be standing by, like a blind man at a prize-fight.

Under this impression, we desire to point out that there are very suspicious circumstances about the whole conduct of the French Emperor.

To begin with, he it was who first gave a dark and dangerous colour to the whole question of the state of Southern Europe. Italy had been in a bad state any time for many years, before he took her up; and then he began by insulting Austria before all Europe, in a way which showed that to reform Italy was not his only or chief object.



THE REHEARSAL.—(FROM A PICTURE BY J. T. HIXON, IN THE PORTLAND GALLERY.)

as communicated to Parliament, on authority, this week. We give the *resumé* that our readers may have them before them, in the most compendious form. The whole threads form a tough knot, and the question at this instant, is whether the knot shall be unloosed by a congress, or cut asunder by the sword.

We need not say—for press and Parliament alike show it—that the wishes and interest of this country are on the side of peace. There is not even a party of the slightest conse-



Then, mark the course of the negotiations of which we have been speaking. Sardinia, under the influence of France, has shown the greatest unwillingness to accept any offer, but take France alone. The moment a practical proposal like that for "disarmament before the Congress" comes, she evades and declines it. She will talk and write about peace to any extent, but shrinks from solid preliminary action; all the while making preparations inconsistent with her professions. So that, admitting Austria's position in Italy to be indefensible in some points, France's action during the last three months has put that question on the shelf. The real question is not whether Italy might or be better governed, but whether France is to be allowed to threaten those powers of whose administration she disapproves? So clearly is that understood in England, that even our strongest Liberals decline to entertain Italian grievances till all fears of French aggression and dictation are over. England loves Italy, and loves Freedom, but she loves still more that fair footing of great Powers towards each other, which is the only security for the peace and freedom of the whole world. Give us a disarmament and a Congress, and we will do our best to see that all Italy gets fair play. But until that comes about, we see nothing but Power threatening Power; we take our stand with the injured Power, or the one most patient and reasonable in the long run; and we reserve ourselves for perfectly independent action when compelled to interfere. If Louis Napoleon refuses concession, and begins—or forces any body else to begin—hostilities, he loses all respect whatever from the British nation from that day forth. He becomes—he and his family—an intrinsic element in the system of Europe, will win (if he wins) without our aid, and fall (if he falls) without our pity. To be neutral but ready for contingencies, will be Great Britain's attitude; nor does she want to meddle with the *bellie* unless threatened anywhere in her legitimate claims, influence, possessions, or honour.

THE REHEARSAL.

BY J. T. HIXON.

THE success which has always attended such comedies as the "Rehearsal" and the "Critic," such operas as "La Prova d'un Opera Seria," such dramas as "Belphegor," such serio-comic pieces as the "First Night," and such farces as "Behind the Scenes," and a dozen others of the same kind, sufficiently testifies to the interest taken by the public in the home-life of the actor. "How does he look off the stage?" is one of the first questions which the enthusiastic young playgoer asks of the experienced *habitué* concerning his favourite dramatic idol. We once, in the columns of the "Illustrated Times" had occasion to reproach the young ladies who visited the Crystal Palace for the energy with which they followed Signor Mario about the grounds after each of the opera concerts. They had seen him in helmets, cuirasses, pourpoints, and, above all, in his celebrated yellow boots, but they had never beheld him in an ordinary black hat, somewhat disipated, and a black frock-coat, with the rest of the modern costume to match. The same extraordinary love of seeing public characters in private life explains the success of Madame Lola Montes, whom the public applaud at the St. James's Hall, though, at her Majesty's Theatre, when she appeared simply in the character of an *artiste*, the audience would not tolerate her. If every one wishes to know how actors and actresses look in plain clothes (which seem at once to reduce them to their own individuality), must not some sort of curiosity be felt as to the private habits and appearance of street performers? How do they study their parts? How, above all, do they teach their able condottieri, the dogs and monkeys? Those who are anxious to enlighten themselves on this subject, should look at our engraving from Mr. Hixon's "Rehearsal," in which the home-life of an itinerant manager, with his little company of quadrupeds, is very pleasantly depicted.

Foreign Intelligence.

FRANCE.

INSTEAD of "Cabinet Councils," latterly Napoleon III. has held consultations of Field-Marshal. General Niel is always closeted at the Tuileries; Marshals Vaillant and Magdon are in close attendance; and when the Imperial mind is relaxed by intervals of hunting, the work of war arrangements is at once resumed. We learn that a naval division under the command of Vice-Admiral Jéhenne has sailed from Brest for the Mediterranean. Nine gunboats are being armed at Cherbourg, for despatch to Toulon; and large masses of troops are in movement daily.

A story is afloat that Lord Cowley had a stormy interview with Count Walewski, lately. Another rumour had it that Count Persigny was to be sent to London on a peaceful mission. This is now contradicted; with the addition "that the Emperor has been 'not at home' to the Count for the last six weeks."

SWITZERLAND.

THE Federal Council of Switzerland has resolved that part of the Swiss forces, which is destined to cover the neutrality of the cantons of Geneva, Ticino, and the adjacent parts of Savoy, shall at once be put on the march. No reply has yet been received from Paris to the Swiss declaration of neutrality, though all the other Powers of Europe have already solemnly declared that they intend to respect it.

ITALY.

IN a recent sitting of the chamber of Deputies at Turin, a bill for a grant of 500,000 francs to be applied to the fortifications of Alessandria, was voted without opposition; after which the chamber proceeded to examine the budget of the ministry for Foreign Affairs, voting all the articles.

Volunteers continue to pour into Piedmont. Six hundred men from Tuscany arrived in one batch lately, and a second detachment of the same strength was expected. Great numbers have also arrived from the Roman States.

The death of the King of Naples has been twice reported since we last went to press. We are told that "parties in Naples were preparing to act, each in its own interest. The Austrian party—which supports the Queen and her son, the Duke of Trauni—hopes to perpetuate the régime of oppression. The masses, on the other hand, pronounce for the hereditary Prince, round whom the liberals appear desirous to rally, with a view of obtaining a constitution, and the participation of Naples in the general affairs of Italy. Men's minds are greatly disturbed, and, as a provision against a possible movement, the troops were kept ready within barracks."

A religious riot took place a few days since among the students of Bologna, and the troops were obliged to fire upon them. Several persons were wounded.

Austria is increasing the garrison of Ferrara. The Archduke Maximilian has left Milan for Vienna.

PRUSSIA.

THE magistrates and communal councillors of Berlin having sent a congratulatory address to the Prince Regent on the occasion of his birthday, his Royal Highness, in his reply, used the following words:—

"The more serious and painful are the circumstances under which my birthday this time returns, the more I feel the value of the sentiments you express to me. I learn with pleasure that you have watched with serious attention my efforts for maintaining the general peace, which, by its long duration, has enabled Prussia to develop her resources to an incredible extent; but I have read with still greater satisfaction the assurance that Berlin will not hesitate to sacrifice her dearest interests for the happiness

and welfare of the country, should it be in the decrees of Providence that the honour of the crown and of the state should one day require it."

The Government has resolved to ask the sanction of the Chambers to contract a loan of 50,000,000 dollars, to provide against military contingencies. The request will be made formally after Easter, a notification to that effect having been made to the president of the Lower House.

In the Prussian Parliament, after a vigorous debate, the principle of the civil contract as affects marriage has been carried by 296 votes against 108.

AUSTRIA.

THE Austrian Government has hired six Austrian Lloyd's steamers. The financial affairs of the empire are reported to have become desperate. Large sums have been drawn from Italian states in treaty with it.

The Bohemian nobles, a few days ago, presented to the Emperor an address, in which they expressed their readiness to sacrifice life and property (*Blut und Gut*) for him.

Still vast preparations for war continue.

TURKEY AND THE EAST.

ISMAIL PACHA has left Constantinople to take the command of the corps d'armée on the Danube. Delegates have arrived at Constantinople from Samos, commissioned to declare to the Porte that the inhabitants of that island are unwilling to recognise the newly-appointed Governor Aristarchi. The delegates invoke their local liberties, and threaten to elect a native prince in case their protest should not be accepted.

A conspiracy against the life of Colonel Couza has been discovered. He was to have been killed at Bucharest by means of an internal machine, and seven persons, who are suspected of having been concerned in the affair (Austrians, it is said) have been arrested. All the Austrians who have established themselves in Belgrade as traders have received notice that they must either become Servian subjects or quit the Principality within thirty days. A commercial crisis threatens in Wallachia and Moldavia.

AMERICA.

GREAT excitement seems to prevail on the Nicaragua question. The seizure of American vessels which we reported last week, has been followed by a demand for "apology, restitution, and indemnity." Several ships of war were being fitted out—some say, in reference to this matter—and there was a talk of forcing the transit, and opening it up to an American company.

The trial of Mr. Sickles for the murder of Attorney-General Key commenced on the 4th, but, by the latest news, proceedings had not gone beyond the impaneling of a jury. One day was spent in obtaining five, and a second in securing three more; nearly all who had been summoned, obtained exemption on the ground that they had previously made up their minds on the merits of the case, and could not, therefore, judge impartially.

At Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, much excitement has been occasioned by a coloured man having been arrested in the market-place, handcuffed, and carried to Philadelphia, under the Fugitive Slave Law.

A most destructive fire has occurred in New Orleans. The cotton press, known as the Lower Levee Press, and about seventy adjacent houses, have been burnt down. The press is said to have contained 40,000 bales of cotton, and 10,000 bales were destroyed. Another despatch says that very little of the 40,000 bales was expected to be saved. The city was in dread of an inundation from the Mississippi. Five hundred men were employed strengthening the levee.

From Hayti, we have accounts to the 21st of March. During the carnival, masks of all the ex-Royal Family were seen. One who personated Souleuvre was stabbed by an Imperialist. The Government fifth of coffee was sold at auction in the city, and not exported, as heretofore. Two merchants were the purchasers, who agreed to remit the price to France in payment of the loan of 800,000 francs, contracted on the 10th of January last.

INDIA.

THE telegraphic news from India this week adds little to what we already knew; but it speaks more positively of the war being at an end in India, and of the rebel armies being broken up and dispersed. Still we are informed that the rebels are in great force in Nepal. Jung Bahadur had sent troops into the jungle to rout them out. The followers of the Begum and Nena Sahib are computed at about 8,000. Brigadier Kelly was watching their movements. There was a body of rebels with Feroze Shah, near Bursad, on the Agra and Bombay Road; another with Rao Sahib, in the Shahjurg district, and a third with Tantia Topce, who was said to be in the Chumbul and Parone jungle.

The Nawab of Farruckabad has been found guilty and sentenced to death. Several rebel chiefs had surrendered.

An attempt was made by a Hindostanee, armed with a carbine, on the life of the Resident at Hydrabad, when returning from the Durbar, on the 15th of March. The assassin was immediately cut down. He is thought to have had no accomplices.

THE INDIAN FINANCES.—The Indian Government has determined to double the Customs Duties. "I understand," says the Calcutta correspondent of the "Times," "the main features of the new tariff will be as follows:—Manchester goods to pay 5 per cent; tea, coffee, tobacco, spices, haberdashery, grocery, and some other articles, 20 per cent; malt liquor, 4s. (6d.) a gallon; wine, 2s. a gallon; spirits, 3s. a gallon; and everything not mentioned 10 per cent, ad valorem. In exports, bullion, horses, cotton, sugar, tobacco, rum, and raw silk are made off free, while a tax of 2s. (3d.) per pound of eighty pounds, is placed on all grain, 4 per cent, on lac dye, and 100s. a chest on Malwa opium, which is not, be it remembered, a monopoly. These measures, none of which involve any injury to trade or the slightest popular feeling, will produce, it is calculated, £1,300,000 addition of real value. The rates quoted have been adjusted with remarkable skill, and I question if there will be any public opposition. The natives do not care, and the Europeans have repeatedly expressed their willingness to see the revenue thus increased. The Government is strongly urged to add a half-farthing a pound to the salt-tax, which would produce £500,000 at once, and to double the excise on country spirits. The first resource will not, I think, be adopted, Government fearing the philanthropists who denounce a tax of a halfpenny a pound on salt as an iniquitous impost. The second is more popular, the natives considering taxes on spirits as not only just, but in a high degree beneficial. Indeed, as every native will inform on a distiller, or, for that matter, hang him without the smallest compunction, there is scarcely a limit to this form of taxation except the means of the drinking classes. At present it costs a man exactly two farthings to make himself thoroughly drunk, and, as the number who avail themselves of the privilege increases year by year, taxation becomes a healthy moral agent. The dislike of an English Mrs. Caudle for a drinker or a drinker, but the low classes are year by year sliding into a habit which we carry with us all over the world."

ANOTHER MEXICAN OUTRAGE.—A new outrage upon an Englishman has just been brought home to the door of the Mexican Government. Mr. Allsopp, an English merchant at Tepic, had been plundered of some 15,000 dollars on a threat of being made a common soldier if he did not lend them to the military commander of the place. He gave the money. A day or so after one of her Majesty's cruisers on the Pacific came into the port of San Blas, which is the port of entry for Tepic. The captain, on hearing of the robbery of Mr. Allsopp, demanded that the money should be at once refunded. This demand having excited some surprise amongst the local officials, the captain threatened to fire upon the town if his demand was not complied with. The consequence was, that the money was handed back to Mr. Allsopp.

COTTON SUPPLY.—The adaptability of Australia and South Africa to the growth of cotton of the most useful, as well as the finest qualities, is placed beyond doubt, by the samples now at Manchester of cotton recently grown in those colonies. The Governor of Sydney, Sir William Denison, takes a strong personal interest in the question of promoting the cultivation of cotton in Australia, and Lieutenant-Governor Scott, of Natal, is doing all in his power to further the same object at the Cape. Private merchants and cultivators in both countries are turning their attention to cotton culture, and we learn that 500 labourers have been engaged to commence cultivation at Rockhampton, in Australia.

THE ITALIAN QUESTION.

THIS has been a week of explanations on this momentous question. In our reports of the debates in Parliament will be found the explanations of our own Government; and below we give an article from the "Moniteur," which not only defines the position of affairs, but gives us hope that there is still in Continental Europe a desire for peace.

"After adhering to the proposition of the court of Russia to the settlement of the Italian affair to a Congress, the Five Powers have decided it expedient to come to an understanding about the bases of the treaty, and then to have agreed on, on the four following points, proposed by the Government of her Britannic Majesty:—

"1. To determine the means whereby peace may be maintained between Austria and Sardinia.

"2. To settle how the evacuation of the Roman States by the French and Austrian troops can be best effected.

"3. To examine if it be proper to introduce reforms into the internal administration of those States and of other Italian States whose administration may present defects evidently tending to create a permanent and dangerous state of disturbance and discontent, and what these reforms should be.

"4. To substitute for the treaties between Austria and the builders a confederation of the Italian States with one another for their mutual protection both at home and abroad.

"Subsequently, the cabinet of Vienna has demanded the previous settling of Saraguna, declaring that this measure was for it an absolute condition of its entering the Congress. As this condition gave rise to objection on the part of all the Powers, the Austrian Government has substituted for a general disarmament before the opening of the Congress.

"The Government of her Britannic Majesty has thought it would be sufficient to admit for the present the principle of a general disarmament, leaving the carrying out of it to be regulated at the opening itself of the deliberations of the plenipotentiaries.

"The Government of the Emperor, guided by the same sense of conciliation that determined it upon adhering to the meeting of a Congress, and to the bases of the negotiation, has not hesitated at giving its assent to this combination.

"A divergent feeling, however, has shown itself since, respecting the question of knowing whether the official admission of Sardinia to the principle thus admitted was previously indispensable or not.

"The Government of the Emperor has thought that Piedmont could not be logically or equitably invited to adhere to this principle, should the Powers at one and the same time not summon her to have herself represented at the Congress.

"As the English Cabinet strongly insisted on France's consenting to procure the previous consent of the Turin Cabinet to the principle of a general disarmament, the Emperor's Government has not refused to give a fresh testimony of its conciliatory disposition, and has promised to visit the request, provided it should be agreed that Sardinia, and all the other Italian States, should be invited to take part in the Congress (faire partie du Congrès).

"Moreover, with respect to the disarmament, as the Emperor's Government has admitted the principle, it can have no objection as to the moment that may be deemed most opportune for putting it into execution, and should the Powers think it right to do so even before the meeting of the Congress, it would see for its part no motive for not complying with this desire.

"Everything leads, therefore, to the presumption that if all the difficulties are not yet removed a definitive good understanding will not fail to be arrived at, and that nothing further will oppose the meeting of the Congress."

This is followed by an important telegram from Turin:—

"At a Council of Ministers held early this morning, at which the King was present, it was resolved:—'That, in order to give to Europe a proof of the desire of Sardinia to remove the difficulties which delay the meeting of a Congress, Sardinia yields to the demand of England and France, and accepts the principle of disarmament, the details of which she will leave to be discussed in the Congress.'

Thus the great obstacle to the meeting of a Congress, as it was described by Mr. Disraeli on Monday night, has been removed, and we hope the opposed parties will now endeavour to settle their disputes in good faith.

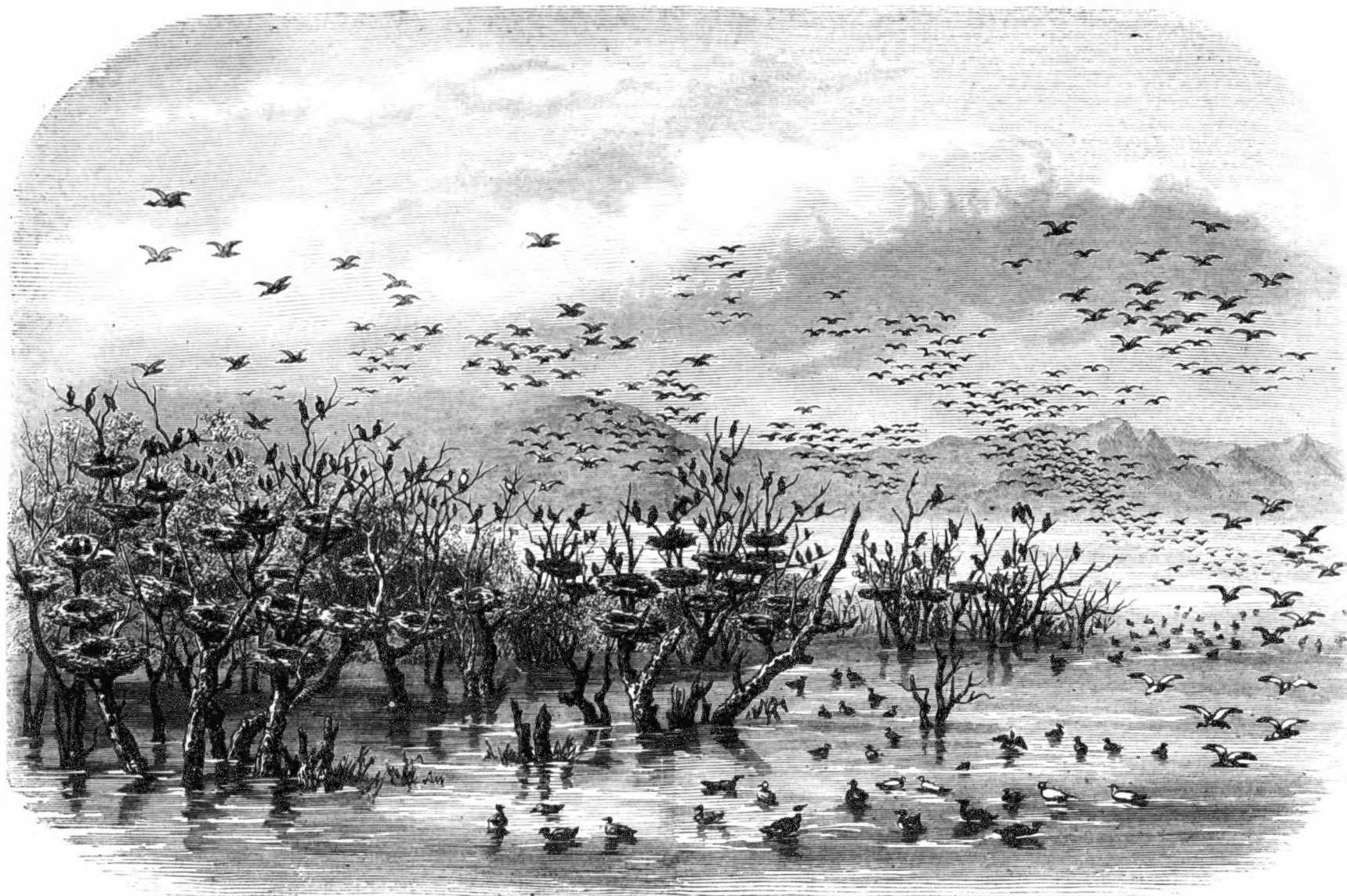
THE NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES.

THIS summer, a commission, consisting of two French and two British representatives, is to investigate the differences between the French and English fishermen at Newfoundland, by inquiries on the spot; and in the meantime Count Walewski has suggested to Lord Cowley that the naval commanders on the station should receive instructions to import all proper forbearance into their proceedings. These arrangements will place the affair in good train, but whether it will be found to admit of a conclusive or satisfactory solution is a question of greater doubt. One of the chief points at issue between the two countries consists in the claim of the French to certain local rights which they invest with an exclusive character. Their title to participate in the Newfoundland fisheries, recognised by the treaty of Utrecht in 1713, and confirmed by the treaty of Versailles, 79 years later, was again established, after the interruptions of the revolutionary wars, by the settlement of 1814. According to these treaties, they are undeniably entitled not only to take fish, but to resort for the purpose of curing and drying these fish to a certain part of the Newfoundland shore during a certain season. It is further stipulated, that "in order that the fishermen of the two nations may not give a cause for daily quarrels, his Britannic Majesty will take the most positive measures for preventing his subjects from interrupting in any manner, b. Their competition, the fishery of the French during the temporary exercise of it which was granted to them." These terms the French interpret as conveying a right of fishery, within certain limits, not only free from all disturbance, but from all participation, on the part of the British, whereas our own Government has always steadily declined to acknowledge that any such exclusive rights, as regarded the actual fishery, were designed to be granted. It is admitted on our side that in practice the French have always been left sole occupiers during the fishing season of their own parts of the shore, and for the simple reason that two sets of fishermen could not carry on their business of curing and drying at one and the same spot. The French are entitled to that temporary lodgment on the coast, without which their fishery itself could not be conducted, and this lodgment, for plain considerations of convenience, they are allowed to keep to themselves; but when the argument is extended to the waters of the fishery it falls altogether. There the French can fish without interruption, although the British may be fishing too, and the treaty, therefore, is not infringed when our fishermen ply their ordinary trade at that spot, provided always that they do not cause interruption to the vessels of the French. Such is the view of the case taken by our authorities, and maintained by the present Ministry.

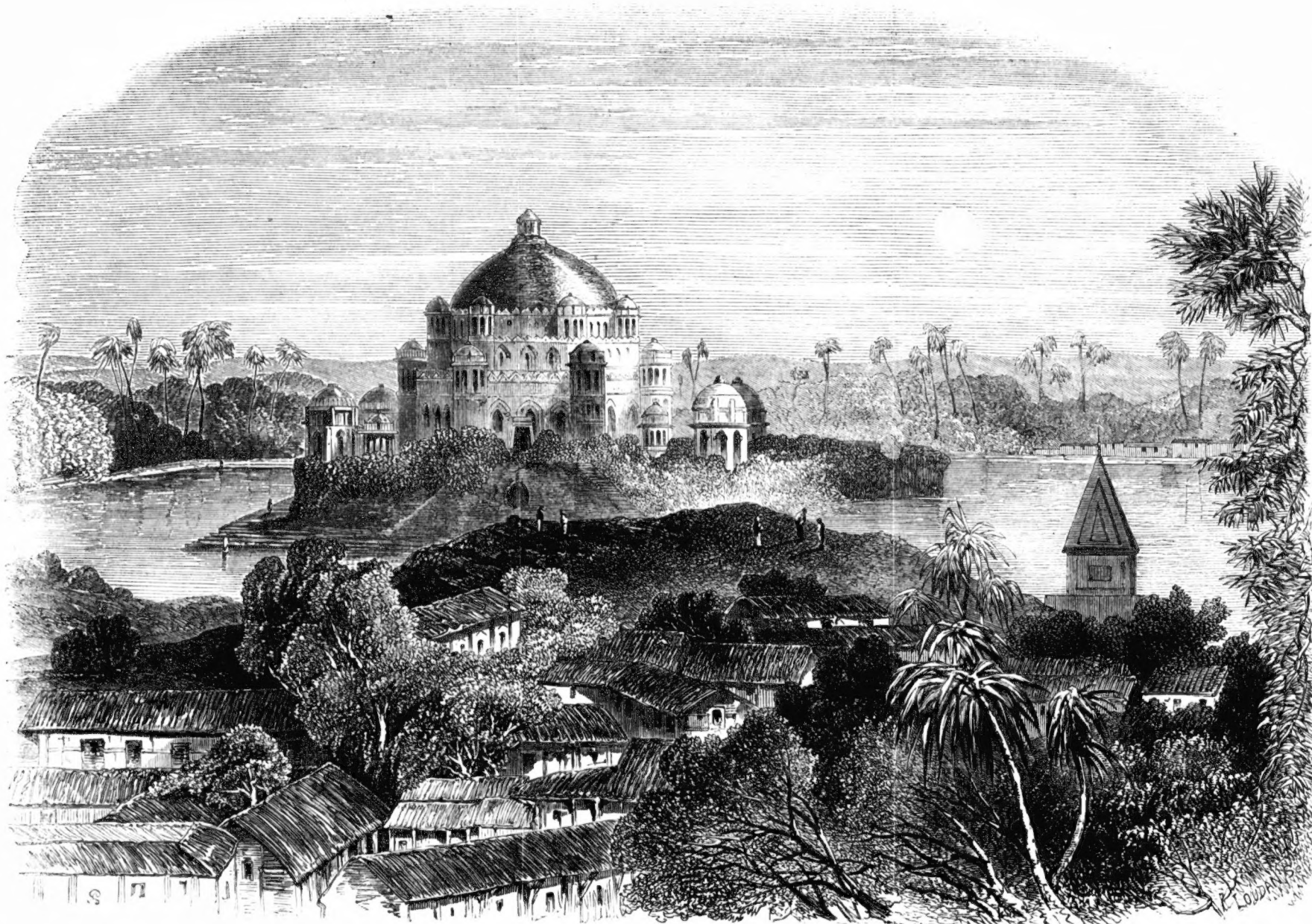
CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATUTES.—A series of bills reach us, drawn up with a view of commencing this important task. We have an "Offence against the Person Bill," a "Larceny Bill," a "Criminal Writings Bill," a "Forgery Bill," a "Coinage Offences Bill," and a "Malicious Injuries Bill." The object of these bills is not, of course, so much to amend as to consolidate previous statutes, and the law in most cases remains unaltered practically, although in a much more comprehensible form. In the first-mentioned bill, we do not note any material changes of the existing law. In the second, however, the Larceny Bill, there is a change to the following effect:—"That if any director, or public officer of a joint-stock company, shall circulate any written statement which he knows to be false, with intent to deceive any member, or creditor of such company, or with intent to induce any person to become a shareholder in, or to invest money in, such company, shall, on being convicted thereof, be liable, at the discretion of the Court, to penal servitude for any period not exceeding seven years, and not less than three years; or imprisonment for any period not exceeding one year, with or without hard labour." The practice, too, of offering rewards for the restoration of some stolen article is put a stop to by a clause in this bill, by which any one doing this is liable to a fine of £50, while any one taking a reward for helping to recover stolen property without bringing the offender to trial, is liable to a punishment of three years' penal servitude. The number of statutes which this one bill would cancel if passed into law are thirty-nine in number, and the forgery bill would take the place of forty-one existing statutes.

CAPTAIN CARNEGIE AND SIR JOHN PAKINGTON

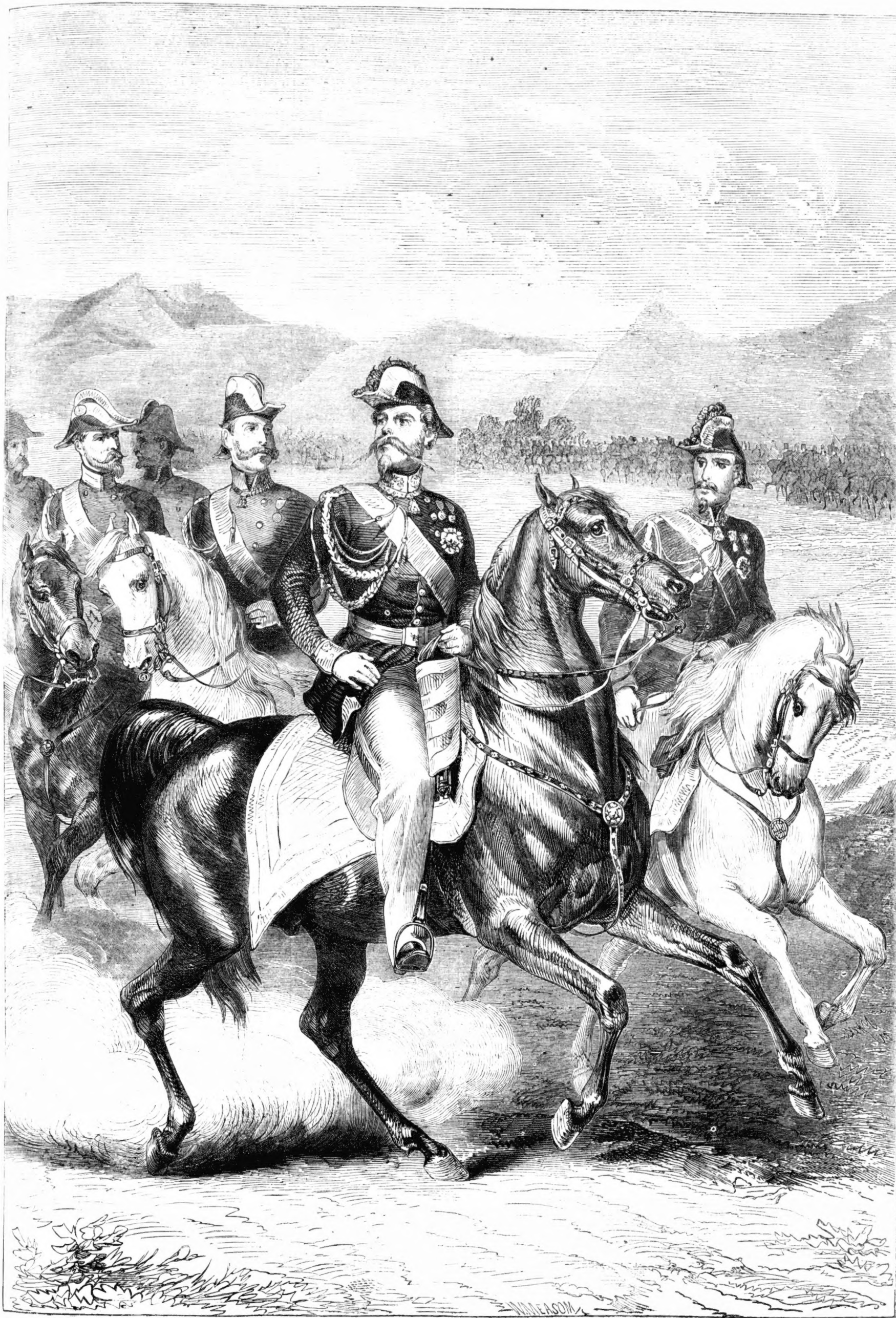
Government has lately allotted £20,000 towards restoring the lake, and decay that time and the seasons have made it suffer.



THE LAKE OF FETZARA, ALGERIA.—(FROM A SKETCH BY M. LUCY.)



THE TOMB OF SHERE SHAH AT SASSERAM.—(FROM A SKETCH BY CAPTAIN HARVEY, 77TH REGIMENT.)



THE KING OF SARDINIA AND HIS STAFF

seats, at once to vacate their official posts. Nor is it less hypocritical to talk about the impossibility of officials attending to their duties, if they are to be running after boroughs, or to be in attendance in Parliament; for it is notorious that the office is only the cloak—the real duty is to make a House, keep a House, cheer the Minister, take their salaries, and hold their tongues. “But is not the system bad?” Perhaps so; but it does not become those who always act upon it, to denounce with affected prudery those who only do the same. Thieving is bad; but it would be a curious sight to see some Jonathan Wyld in the pulpit, clothed in canonicals, solemnly denouncing thieves.

RAILWAY ACCOMMODATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRIZE-FIGHTS.—Attention has been called to the facilities afforded by the South-Eastern Railway Company to large bodies of persons who travelled on their line whilst avowed object of taking part in prize-fights, and thus committing a breach of the peace. On the occasion of the recent fight for the championship, a special train of thirty-four carriages, containing nearly two thousand persons, stopped for a long time midway between Huddersfield and Puckleton, those travelling by the ordinary trains being thereby greatly endangered.

Imperial Parliament.

FRIDAY, APRIL 15.
HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE RED SEA TELEGRAPH.

The motion for the third reading of the Red Sea and India Telegraph Bill, a private measure, was opposed, on public grounds, by Lord Stanley of Alderbury, and after some conversation, postponed, and the further progress of the bill suspended until another session.

SCHOOLS IN INDIA.

The Duke of Argyll called attention to the question relating to schools in India, and moved an address to the Crown, praying for copies of all rules, regulations, and conditions under which grants in aid of schools are afforded by the Government; and also for a return of the number of schools which have received such grants, distinguishing those which are under the management of the Government, from those conducted by Europeans, and of the amount of grants in each case. The Noble Duke, in pursuing the subject, entered into a lengthy and general question of secular education in India. He alluded to the fact that the Government had not yet decided upon a question which had been brought forward by the Duke of Marlborough, and that the Duke of Devon suggested some modifications in the form of the motion, which were adopted by the Duke of Argyll, and the address for returns was ordered.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE PHOENIX CONSPIRACY.

Mr. M'MURDOCH inquired whether the Attorney-General for Ireland could give any explanation relative to the setting aside of jurors at the late Rye House trials in Belfast, and could state the names of the jurors so set aside, and the reasons for which they were challenged by the Crown prosecutor? Mr. WILKINSON, after remarking that the House of Commons was an inappropriate tribunal for an inquiry into the constitution of Irish juries, gave explanations on the subject, and vindicated the course pursued at the inquest.

After a few remarks from Mr. H. HERBERT, the subject dropped.

OUR FORCES IN INDIA.

In reply to a question from Sir G. C. Lewis, Mr. PEARCE stated that the British force now in India comprised 74 regiments of infantry and 12 of cavalry, of which he was anxious to withdraw as many as possible. From a recent letter of Lord Clyde's, however, it appeared that only seven regiments of infantry and one of cavalry could at present be spared by the Indian Government.

THE DATE OF PROCLAMATION.

In answer to Lord Palmerston, Mr. DISRAELI said that it was still impossible to fix the precise day when Parliament would be dissolved. Both prorogation and dissolution would, however, take place next (this) week, and the new House might be expected to assemble on the 31st of May.

The motion for adjourning until Monday was agreed to, and the House adjourned afterwards.

MONDAY, APRIL 18.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE STATE OF EUROPE.

Lord MALMESBURY called attention to the state of affairs on the Continent. He briefly reviewed the position of the three principal Powers in regard to this country. Although connected with Austria by similarity of race and an ancient alliance, the people of this country were alienated from her by the policy which Austria had pursued in Italy. No statesman in this country would for a minute deny the rights of Austria—rights which had been acquired by conquest, inheritance, and treaty. These rights were secured by treaties which she had signed, and which every Government was bound to uphold. But a true cause of complaint against Austria arose from her interference with the other Italian States besides Lombardy. In passing to Sardinia, he said that a strong feeling in her favour existed in this country, but the assimilation of her institutions to our own, and he regretted that, after her noble conduct in the late war, she should have so far forgotten that duty which ought not to be the sole object of a government, for it was manifestly a cause that the present difficulties had arisen. Why France should involve herself in this question, it was difficult to understand; but France had brought fit to unite her cause with Sardinia, and to assert her right to look into the affairs of Italy in opposition to Austria. Such was the state of affairs in the month of February, at which period Lord Cowley was despatched to Vienna. Thereafter, conversant with the views of the French Government in regard to the Italian question, Lord Cowley had calmly, and as a friend, discussed the subject with Count Buol. It was a matter for regret that Lord Cowley had not been allowed then and there to mediate, as there would have been more chance of a successful result than at present. Lord Cowley, on his return to Paris, found that negotiations had been going on between France and Russia during his absence, the consequence of which was a proposal from Russia that a congress of the five great Powers should be held, to which her Majesty's Government had agreed, as they felt they should incur too heavy a responsibility by refusing. On March 22nd, Baron Brunow had proposed to him the bases on which the Congress should take place, to which he (Lord Malmesbury) added the stipulation that the treaties of 1815 should be left undisturbed. To these stipulations the five Powers had agreed, but subsequently two collateral questions arose as to the composition of the Congress and the disarmament of the Powers antagonistic to each other. Much discussion had taken place on these points, the latter of which had not yet been settled. It was the opinion, however, of her Majesty's Government that a disarmament was necessary previous to the assembling of the Congress. The Congress was to consist of the five great Powers; but as the questions to be considered affected the social and political importance of Italy, he thought that the different Italian nations should be represented, and it had therefore been proposed that these nations should be invited to attend, and admitted when the Congress wished to hear them. Sardinia would therefore not be represented in the Congress, but invited, with the other Italian States, to send a delegate to put its wishes before the Congress. Austria and France had agreed to the principle of a disarmament, but differed as to the time and mode of carrying it out. It was his opinion that it would be much better to submit this point to a commission, in order that, on its meeting, Congress should discuss purely political subjects. Sardinia had also been invited to disarm on the same footing as Austria, but refused, on the ground of her non-admission to the Congress. He regretted that he could not give a more satisfactory account of these negotiations, but it might be presumed that, for their own credit, the Government had used every effort to avert a war which would be no common one, but would be a theatre for the dreams of the wildest theorists and the most unprincipled adventurers.

Lord CLARENDON said that, assuming the various Governments were sincere, and not pursuing a policy they were ashamed to avow, it was hard to conceive how matters had arrived at their present state. They had all declared their intention of not attacking each other. England and Prussia had done their best to mediate, but still armaments were going on amongst them. In France everything denoted a campaign; Sardinia was draining her resources to support her army, and the war-spirit of Germany could be hardly repressed; and yet, although they were all clamorous for a Congress, they could not agree on the conditions on which that Congress was to meet. As to a general disarmament, he thought that matters had gone too far, for none of the parties would now trust each other. If, however, there existed a real desire for peace, the whole business might be concluded by a Congress in a fortnight. At present it was hard to know what a Congress was wanted for. If it were to alter the territories of Italy in Italy, Austria would not recognise the power of the Congress of 1859 to abrogate the settlements of the Congress of 1815. If it were that Austria was to abandon the Papal territory, Austria was ready to do so if France would abandon Rome. He objected to the alteration of the treaties of Vienna, for he thought they had answered their object in preserving the peace of Europe. So far as Austria stood on treaties she ought to receive the support of the other Powers; but she had no right to transgress the limits of the territory assigned her, and ought not to be allowed to reduce the other States of Italy to a condition of political vassalage. He considered France was responsible for the defects of the Papal Government, and he could not imagine a great nation in a more unworthy position. He could not conceive what was the necessity for war. War could not settle the Italian question; but, in fact, Piedmont had been nothing more in this matter than the advanced guard of France, and in case of Austrian defeat only one master would be substituted for another. Trusting that Lord Malmesbury would carry to the Congress with him the whole moral support of this country, he assured him that no party spirit would prevent him from making every allowance for the difficulties of the subject, and that he should be only too glad to hear of his success.

Lord Denny thanked Lord Clarendon and Parliament for not embarking Government in the present condition of affairs, since the best chance of maintaining peace was that Europe should well understand that no difference existed on that point in the English Parliament. There could be no doubt of the intention of this country, with other great Powers, to maintain the treaties of 1815; it was, indeed, a sine qua non of the Congress. He could not help concurring that there might have been a greater chance of peace if the matter had been left in the hands of Lord Cowley, who had succeeded in laying down bases on which France and Austria were

disposed to treat. The proposal of Russia, from which it was impossible for the Government to have withheld their consent, had introduced all the subsequent difficulties. But the first difficulty was mainly due to the King of Sardinia's words, that "a cry of anguish came from Italy, and he could not endure it." When such words were used it was not unnatural that Austria should make preparations on a large scale, although Piedmont had nothing to fear from Austria as long as she kept within her own bounds. He agreed with Lord Clarendon as to the injurious results of the treaties which Austria had entered into with the Italian States, and thought it would be wise for her to reconsider them. In regard to the Papal States, it would be best to leave that matter to France and Austria during the Congress, allowing the Pope a voice in the question. The time was now nearly come when it was a question whether a Congress should be held at all; the time, in fact, when England would have to say that the time for trifling had gone by, and she would therefore withdraw from further interference. If there were a war, which God forbid! it would not be localised in Italy; it would be impossible to confine it to that country; it would involve the world in conflagration. It would soon bring the whole of Germany into the field; it would be impossible for this country to look unmoved on the occurrence of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, and it would be impossible to confine such a war within limits as to force who would be drawn into it. The policy of this country in such an event was neutrality—but it must be an armed neutrality. He trusted that the storm might pass without breaking. The chance of peace, however, would be immeasurably strengthened if it were known that this country would not remain an unmoved spectator of any point in which her honour was concerned.

The subject then dropped.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER made his promised statement respecting foreign affairs. After explaining the origin and development of the dispute between France, Sardinia, and Austria, respecting the Italian States, he recapitulated the series of events and negotiations which the Foreign Secretary narrated to the Peers. Mr. Disraeli stated that the point at present requiring adjustment related to the question of disarmament. The condition upon which the Congress was to meet having been agreed upon, Austria stipulated for another—the disarmament of Sardinia. Her Majesty's Government did not approve of this proposition, and ultimately Austria consented to waive this invidious condition, and proposed a general disarmament. France accepted this proposal of Austria, but Sardinia had not yet assented, because she had not been invited to be present at the Congress. Her Majesty's Government were prepared to put the most generous interpretation upon her conduct, and to consider the proposal of Sardinia to be present at the Congress most favourably. But she was not one of the great Powers, and, if Sardinia was present, other Italian States would have a title to appear, and precedents might be pleaded for their admission. We were, therefore, in this condition—France and Austria had accepted the principle of disarmament; Sardinia had not assented, on account of her exclusion from the Congress; but he should have that this difficulty might be got over; and he had the satisfaction of stating that the Marquis M. D'Azeglio had arrived in this country on a special mission, from which he expected the best results. Under these circumstances, he did not believe that there was a Power in Europe that would wantonly provoke a war, and there was a strong power in public opinion. An Italian war would probably be a European war, and if the war should spread beyond Italy England might be interested not only in the cause of civilisation, but on imperial considerations of the most urgent character. He trusted, however, that with firmness and conciliation the peace of the world might be preserved.

Lord PALMERSTON said he believed her Majesty's Government had acted from a sense of duty in engaging in these informal negotiations, though he thought that, had they been of a more formal character, they might have had a more successful issue. It was natural that Austria should have wished that the negotiations at the Congress should have been preceded or accompanied by a general disarmament; but it was an unreasonable condition that Sardinia alone should disarm, and her Majesty's Government were right in objecting to it. Why should not the Congress meet at once, and settle the material points in dispute, instead of discussing the vague question of a general disarmament? This would require a long space of time, and if its adjustment was to be preliminary to the negotiations, they would be postponed indefinitely. Let France and Austria withdraw their troops from Central Italy, and pledge themselves that, under no circumstances, should they return; the Congress then might take into the question of the restoration of Italy in general. The present difference arose from the disposition of Sardinia to disarm unless admitted to the Congress. As the force of Sardinia was so much less than that of Austria, the latter need not be alarmed, and England and France might act at ease in this respect. No doubt it might be said that Sardinia was not one of the great leading Powers of Europe; but she was a member of the Conference at Paris, and she might be said to stand in an analogous position now. She was also one of the parties called upon to disarm, and it that question was to be discussed in the Congress, she might say she had a right to be there and be a party to the discussion. He trusted that no Government would be so blind to its duties, to itself, to its subjects, to Europe, and to mankind, as to enter into a war without necessity, which would be not merely a fault, but a crime.

Mr. T. DUNCOMB insisted that Sardinia ought to be represented at the Congress; the reasons of Count Cavour were, in his opinion, unanswerable; yet the five great Powers tyrannically said she should not be present to plead the cause of Italy. It was not to be rid of Austria before the peace and happiness of her people could be secured.

Mr. GLANVILLE regretted that the meetings of the Congress were suspended while the different governments were disputing about details. When vast armies were kept almost in sight of one another, a casual spark might at any moment inflame a general war. Two points had to be regarded—first, to maintain peace; and, secondly, to place the pacific arrangements on such a basis as to insure some relief to suffering humanity in Italy from the grievous yoke of their native or foreign rulers.

After some remarks from Mr. CONINGHAM, Lord JOHN RUSSELL briefly expressed his concurrence in the opinion enunciated by Lord Palmerston, that the controversy respecting details need not delay the meeting of the proposed Congress. He also believed that Sardinia was justified in demanding to take a part in the proceedings. He concluded by expressing a hope that the Government would enter into no engagements burdensome to the people of this country without the knowledge of Parliament.

Some further observations were made by Mr. M. MILNES, General THOMPSON, and Sir J. WALSH; the formal motion with which Mr. Disraeli had prefaced his speech was then agreed to, and the subject dropped.

THE AFFAIRS OF INDIA.

Sir G. C. LEWIS moved a resolution setting forth that it is not competent to the Secretary of State for India, under the act for the better government of India, to send orders and instructions through the secret department to the governments and presidencies of India on any subject not being a matter concerning the levying war or making peace, or treating or negotiating with any of the native princes or states in India. The Right Honourable Member was proceeding to explain and support this motion, when the House was counted out.

TUESDAY, APRIL 19.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE PROROGATION.

This afternoon, Parliament was prorogued by Royal Commission, preparatory to its dissolution. The attendance of peers was very small, not more than half a dozen being present.

About two o'clock, the Royal Commissioners, comprising the Lord Chancellor, the Marquis of Salisbury, the Earl of Hardwicke, Marquis of Exeter, and Earl Delawar entered, and took their seats immediately in front of the throne. The Black Rod was then directed to summon the Commons to the bar, and soon afterwards the Speaker appeared there, accompanied by the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, several members of the Government, and other members.

A commission was read by the clerk at the table, authorising the Lords Commissioners to give the Royal assent to several public and private acts agreed upon by both Houses.

The Lord CHANCELLOR, remaining seated, then read the following Speech:—

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"We are commanded by her Majesty to inform you that it is her Majesty's intention forthwith to dissolve the present Parliament, with a view to enable her people to express, in the mode prescribed by the constitution, their opinion on the state of public affairs.

"GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,

"We are commanded by her Majesty to thank you for the wise liberality with which you have granted the necessary supplies for the military and naval defences of the country, and for the provision which you have made for the exigencies of the other branches of the public service during the interval which must elapse before the estimates for the year can be considered by the new Parliament, which her Majesty will direct to be immediately called.

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"Her Majesty commands us to inform you that the appeal which she is about to make to her people has been rendered necessary by the difficulties experienced in carrying on the public business of the country, as indicated by the fact that within little more than a year two successive administrations have failed to retain the confidence of the House of Commons; and her Majesty prays that, under the blessing of Divine Providence, the step which she is about to take may have the effect of facilitating the discharge of her high functions, and of enabling her to continue the government of the country under the advice of a ministry possessed of the confidence of her parliament and her people."

The royal commission was next read by the clerk at the table, for the proroguing the Parliament till Thursday, the 25th of May next, and the Lord Chancellor, in her Majesty's name, declared it to stand prorogued accordingly.

The Speaker and the members of the House of Commons then proceeded to their own chamber, and their Lordships broke up.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The House assembled at a quarter to two o'clock, and the Speaker shortly afterwards took the chair.

Soon after, Sir A. CROFT, the Under of the Black Rod, appeared at the bar, and summoned the House to stand at the bar of the House of Commons to hear the Royal assent given by commission to certain bills, and the commission read for proroguing the present Parliament.

The Speaker, in obedience to the summons, followed by the members present, proceeded to the House of Peers.

On the return of the Speaker, to take his place at the Clerk's table, and read a copy of the Bill as given above, all the members present standing round the table. This done, each member shook hands with the Speaker, and in less than five minutes the House was dissolved.

Thus ended the fifth Parliament of her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria.

(The following appeared in a portion only of our Last Week's Impression.)

THURSDAY, APRIL 14.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

The Earl of MALMESBURY postponed until Monday his statement respecting foreign affairs.

THE INDIAN MUTINY—VOTE OF THANKS.

The Earl of DELBY moved a vote of thanks to the Governor-General of India, Lord Clyde, and others, for the services, civil and military, who had assisted in suppressing the late revolt in India. The Noble Lord enumerated the chief services rendered by the persons whose names appeared in the vote, as well as of the European and native army and naval brigade, during the recent rebellion.

The motion was seconded by Lord GRANVILLE. The Duke of CAMBRIDGE, the Earl of ELLENBOROUGH, and the Earl of ALBEMARLE, also expressed their concurrence in the vote, which was then unanimously agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

VOTE OF THANKS TO PUBLIC SERVANTS IN INDIA.

Lord STANLEY moved a vote of thanks to the various civil functionaries, and to the army in every rank, whether comprising Europeans or natives, for their distinguished services during the late revolt in India. Lord Stanley directed the vote to be directed to the distinguished officers whose names were included in the vote, and sketched the principal achievements performed by each in his special department of service. In sketching names for special commendation out of the throng of gallant officers who had performed brilliant services, the Government, he observed, had followed established precedent by including those only who had held an independent command and taken part in the reconstructions during the campaign. Mentioning by name some living officers, and among others Lord of Chamberlaine and Sir S. Cotton, who could well deserve to have figured in the list, though excluded by the rule of precedence, and Lord Stanley touched shortly on the performance of duty by the officers and soldiers in the course of service—Major Hobson and Sir W. T. and concluded by paying a tribute of admiration to the gallantry, zeal, and devotion shown by the general body of officers and men, soldiers, sailors, and marines—European and Native—during the late campaign.

Lord PALMERSTON seconded the motion, regarding to take part in a duty which, he observed, presented a welcome change from the ordinary activities of political controversy.

After a few words from Sir DE LACY EVANS, Lord JOHN RUSSELL, cordially concurring in the vote, remarked that never in the history of the world had a more terrible danger been more gallantly met and more triumphantly overcome than by the military and civil servants of the Crown during the last three years in India.

After some remarks from Mr. V. SMITH, Colonel NORTH, Mr. KISSAID, Sir W. CORDINGHAM, and Mr. VANSITTART, the vote was passed amidst contradictory.

BILLS.

The Exchequer Bills (£13,227,400) Bills and the Consolidated Fund (Appropriation) Bill, and the Convict Prisons Abroad Bill, were read a third time and passed.

AMENDMENT OF THE STATUTE LAW.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved for leave to bring in a bill to consolidate and amend the statute law of England and Ireland relating to offences against the person. This measure was the first of a series in which the attempt would be made to simplify, arrange, and consolidate the whole body of the statute law.

Leave was given, and the bill was brought in and read a first time. The House adjourned at half-past eight o'clock.

AUSTRIAN CONCESSION.

It is asserted that the reply of the Austrian Government to the last proposal, respecting the representation of Piedmont in the Congress, has arrived to-day, and that the reply is to the effect that Austria does not object to the admission of Piedmont.

It is further stated that the French Government has given its consent to the appointment of a commission for carrying out the disarmament, requiring only that it be composed of diplomatic individuals, while Austria and England, on the other hand, propose that it be constituted of military members.

VERDICT IN THE RAMSGATE CASE.—A verdict has been returned that the deceased died from a wound in the left breast, but by whom inflicted there is not evidence to show.

THE CONFERENCES ON THE DANUBIAN PRINCIPALITIES.

The affairs of the Danubian Principalities are again occupying much of the attention of Europe, and a conference for the definite arrangement of the much-vexed question of Prince Couza's double election has been sitting in the French capital. The result of the second meeting of the delegates is known—and it is, that five of the Powers represented, viz., England, France, Russia, Prussia, and Sardinia, recognise the choice made by the Moldavo-Wallachians in electing Prince Couza. Austria and Turkey have, as yet, refused to give in their adhesion. However, it is anticipated that there will be little difficulty in inducing Turkey to follow the example of the majority, and England is using her powerful influence to bring this about. It is also presumed that Austria will not long withhold her consent to the election; that is, should there be no war, in which case Austria will make use of this recognition as a concession in the general Congress.

It is said that the next meeting of the Conference is postponed until after Easter, in order that the two adverse ambassadors may have time to refer to their Governments for further instructions. On the other hand it is asserted that the affair is settled, and that the plenipotentiaries will shortly hold a formal and final meeting to sign the protocol. It is observed, accordingly, that if the great European Congress is to be held so soon as has been alleged (the 25th of April has been frequently mentioned), it is difficult to suppose that a Congress, to which some of the members necessarily engaged in the first also belong, should be sitting simultaneously in Paris.

The engraving which we publish in this week's impression of the plenipotentiaries seated in council, will, we hope, be interesting to our readers.



M. RUPRECHT.

COUNT VILLAMARINA.

M. BUENAR.

THE PARIS CONFERENCE ON THE DANUBIAN PRINCIPALITIES.

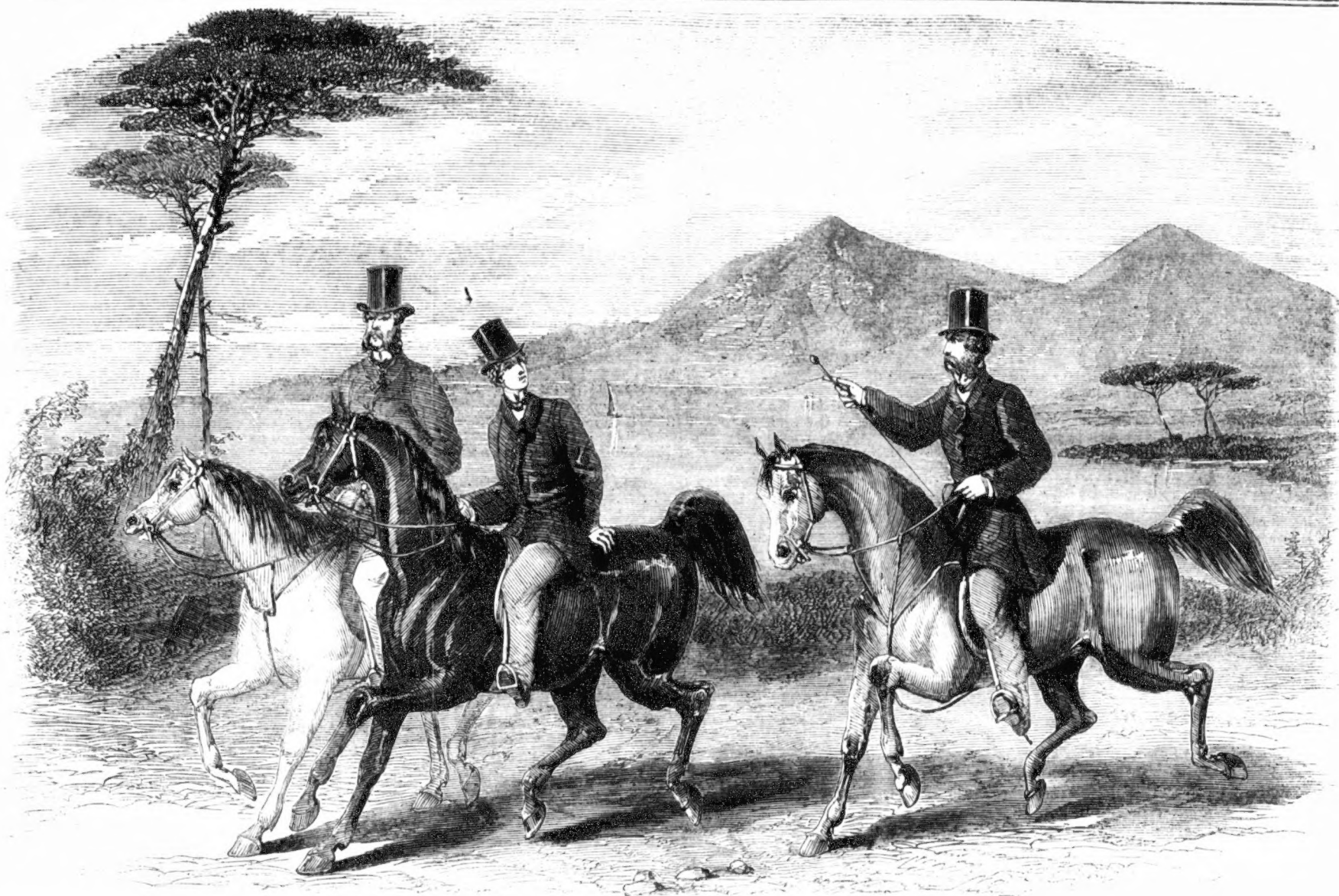
M. FORTALE.

COUNT WALLESKI.

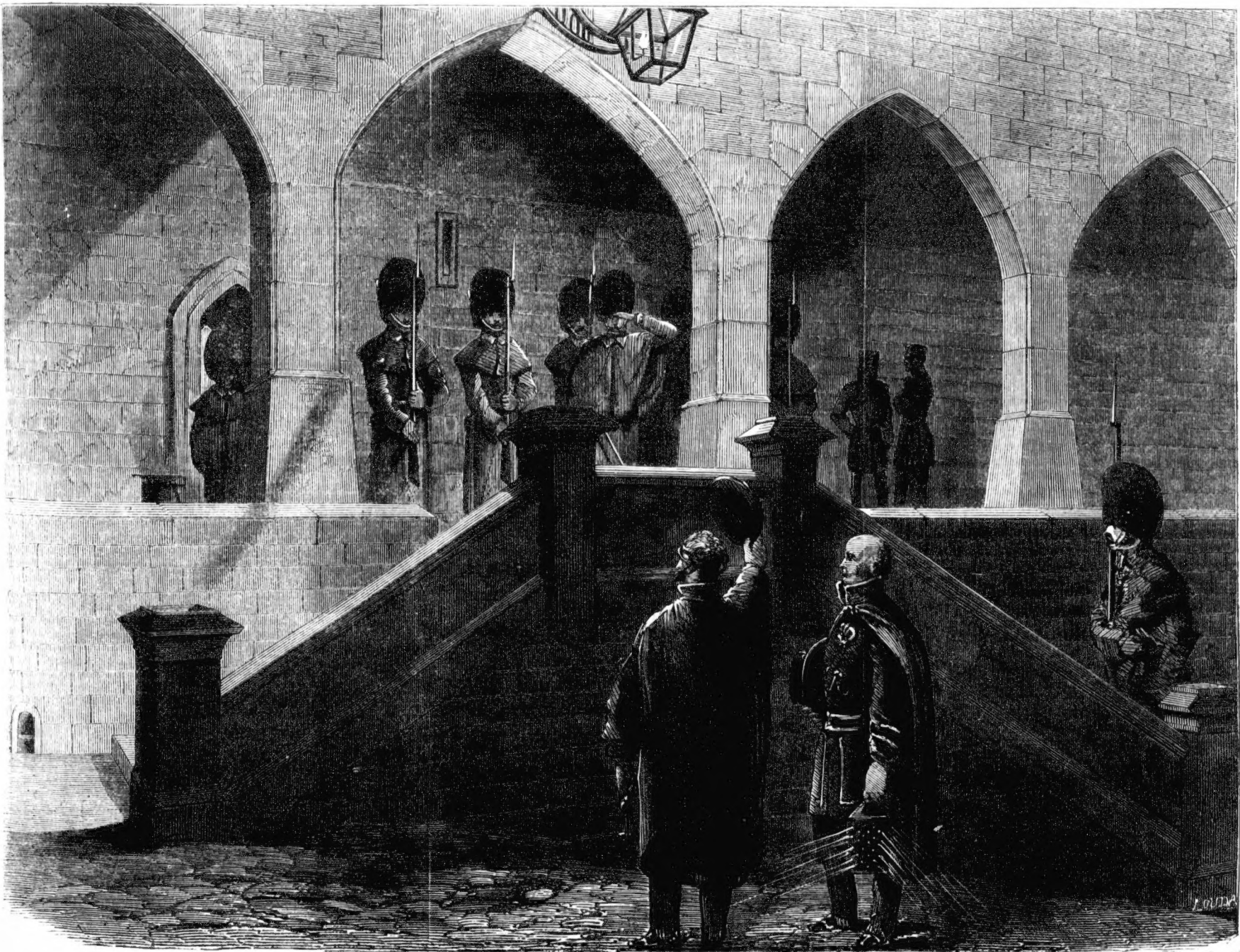
LODGE COWLEY.

M. KISSLEPP.

SECRETARY.



THE PRINCE OF WALES IN THE CAMPAGNA, ROME.—(FROM A SKETCH BY MISS PRISCILLA FRIMBORN.)



SALUTING QUEEN VICTORIA'S KEYS: ANCIENT CEREMONY AT THE TOWER.

THE PRINCE OF WALES IN ROME.

OUR indefatigable correspondent this week places it in our power to give an illustration of the Prince of Wales taking his "constitutional" in the Campagna at Rome. His Royal Highness is accompanied by Colonel Bruce and another gentleman of his suite. The Prince lately made an excursion to Mentana, and explored the interesting site of the ancient Nomentum, in company with Lord Stratford de Redcliffe; after which the party proceeded to luncheon at Monte Rotondo, where they were received at Prince Piombino's palace, remarkable for the lofty tower which commands so magnificent a panoramic view over the surrounding Campagna and adjacent range of Sabine mountains. His Royal Highness has continued his visits to the studios of Rome, returning a second time to that of the celebrated Tenerani, to become acquainted with the sculptor himself—for, as the Prince courtously remarked, he had previously seen only his works. Mr. Cardwell's studio, and especially his beautiful marble statue of Salvoia, afforded the Prince much gratification. Major Teesdale, of Kurs celebrity, has just arrived in Rome, and will succeed Captain Grey in his post of Equerry to the Prince.

SALUTING THE KEYS AT THE TOWER OF LONDON.

ANCIENT ceremonies and ancient customs are fast fading away in this age of improvement; and it is as well to "make a note" of them ere they pass out of memory. For this reason, we this week illustrate a ceremony, of which but few have heard.

Locking up the Tower is an ancient, curious, and stately ceremony. A few minutes before the clock strikes the hour of twelve, the head warder (yeoman porter), clothed in a long red cloak, bearing a huge bunch of keys, and attended by a brother warder carrying a lantern, appears in front of the guard-house, and loudly calls out "Escort Keys!" The sergeant of the guard, with five or six men, then turns out, following him to the "Spur," or outer gate, each sentry challenging as they pass his post. "Who goes there?" "Keys!" The gates being carefully locked and barred, the procession returns, the sentries exacting the same explanation, and receiving the same answer as before. Arrived once more in front of the main-guard house, the sentry there gives a loud stamp with his foot, and asks, "Who goes there?" "Keys." "Whose keys?" "Queen Victoria's keys." "Advance, Queen Victoria's keys, and all's well." The yeoman porter then exclaims, "God bless Queen Victoria." The gentleman with the lantern then says, "Amen." The officer on duty gives the word "Present arms," the firelocks rattle, the officer kisses the hilt of his sword, the escort fall in among their companions, and the yeoman porter marches across the parade alone to deposit the keys in the lieutenant's lodgings. The ceremony over, not only is all egress and ingress totally precluded, but even within the walls no one can stir without being furnished with the countersign.

* * * After the expiration of the present month, the "Illustrated Times" will be printed by improved machinery, which will admit of its earlier Editions containing one day's later news.

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ILLUSTRATED TIMES.

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1859.

THE ELECTIONS.

It is too soon as yet for anybody to predict what the result of the Dissolution will be. After reading many addresses, and the reports of many meetings, so far, we are inclined to think that there are few purely political, as distinct from personal, contests going on. The majority of battles are between persons who do not hold opinions very different from each other, but who are working local and individual influences with great activity. This is especially the case in the metropolitan boroughs, and indeed there is no great fight of a public character which should furnish a model to the constituencies, like that between Brougham and Canning for Liverpool, or such contests of the olden days. Our chaotic non-party condition, we think, has yet a longer course to run, before it produces a re-action striking enough to give us definite distinctions and strong ministries.

Strictly speaking, there are two questions submitted to the country—whether the state of foreign affairs is so critical as to demand from us a strong Government at any price, or whether we shall have a practicable Reform Bill at an earlier period. In looking at the election preparations so far, we are struck with the comparative indifference to the former of these. Men neither speak nor write much about that great shadow of danger which is hanging over Europe; and those who do, find the anxiety they can work upon less vivid than might have been expected. Little, for instance, is heard of the national defences—little of the sorrows of Italy or the ambition of France. If foreign critics know how to interpret this fact, they may read in it a strong disposition for neutrality in case of war, but a disposition which would be instantly exchanged for enthusiastic indignation if British interests were assailed. We can hardly rebuke a tranquillity of sentiment which at least prevents politicians from trading on those foreign "sympathies" now dominant amongst us; but it must not be encouraged to the point where quiet becomes apathy, involving non-preparation and probable peril from without.

On the other question, of reform, we observe, as yet, less excitement than might have been expected after a dissolution following on a seven nights' debate. The country will not accept an alternative of pure conservatism or pure reform; candidates gravitate towards each other in their professions on the subject; and though the result will be a House some shades more advanced in reform sympathies than the last, we do not think the distinction will be immensely marked. But this will not prevent isolated personal contests from being very keen; because, where there are few *prima facie* cases of a candidate's being rejected for his opinions at once—there will be all the more

room for ordinary local influences, good or bad. Thus, we expect that men elected last time on the Palmerston cry only, will be often turned out without being replaced by men very different from them in general principles. So that this mere party confusion of the House will be little abated, in our opinion, by the new elections. A few pure Derbyites may be added from the circumstance that Lord Derby's Government is in; and perhaps personally, Lord Derby may gain more in followers than any individual minister. But the great bulk of members elected will be, as before, disinclined to personal allegiance and only vaguely pledged to general principles, for the personnel of the House may change, with its character changing. We warn our readers, therefore, thus early, from expecting anything wonderful in the way of novelty. We see no signs of it. We expect, indeed, a House that will pass a Reform Bill half-way between the late failure, and the extreme measures advocated by some—and that is all. The dissolution will have done the good of giving the country a chance of saying its say, and will compel our statesmen to come to some agreement as to who shall govern the country and what they shall pass. But whatever this may be worth so far, we shall not be free from the risk of changes and confusions again, within a moderately short time—because the House, elected as it has been, can only act in the vagueness of sentiment which exists just now in the country.

There are one or two individual changes in the representation decided on already, which will interest the country. Of these is the selection of Mr. Lowe for Cane by Lord Lansdowne, *vice* Williams, resigned. Williams has done his duty in Cane, by letting the story of Kars be forgotten. Lowe has earned the honour of succeeding him by turning his Radicalism into Liberalism of the Whig aristocratic type. Lowe will lose, in consequence, with his earlier admirers; but his election is a sign that the Whig nobles feel that their borough-system needs respectability, and also that they mean to stick to it in whatever reforms they may favour us with.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

THE QUEEN has been pleased to grant the dignity of a Knight of the United Kingdom to Bremen Halliwell, Esq., (Sam Slick,) Justice of Nova Scotia.

THE PRINCE CONSORT has consented to accept the office of patron to the Church of England Book Hawking Union, contributing £25 to the funds.

THE PRINCESS ALICE MAUD MARY, her Majesty's second daughter, completes her sixteenth year on the 25th instant.

THE MEMBERS OF THE NEW SOCIETY IN WATER COLOURS have very temperately memorialised the Government for a local habitation worthy of their name, and justly claim additional facilities of exhibition.

A NEWLY-APPOINTED CONSTABLE, at Rochester, a few days ago undertook to turn a man out of court, who he thought was interrupting the proceedings. The gentleman quietly withdrew, and the constable soon after was informed that he had turned out the sheriff.

THE MARLBOROUGH STREET MAGISTRATE has read Dr. Lonsdale, master of an academy in Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, the sum of £5 for beating a pupil, who had committed the heinous offence of having a pen-knife and using that destructive weapon in school. The magistrate said the punishment inflicted was not correction, but gross and cowardly brutality.

THE RAILWAY between Marseilles and Toulon is now open for traffic; the journey occupies four hours.

A SPANISH WAR STEAMER, the Don Juan de Austria, has arrived at Jamaica with the missing portion of the crew of the *Jacinto*. Of the whole crew only three had been lost; one of them jumped overboard, and was drowned.

TWO POACHERS, Boulton and Danks, who were found guilty, at the late Chester Assizes, of the murder, at Dodington, of two game-keepers, and who were condemned to death, have been executed.

THE OWNERS AND CAPTAINS of thirty-two English merchant vessels who frequent the port of Constantinople have presented an address to the Grand Duke Constantine, expressing gratitude for the measures recently taken by order of his Imperial Highness for improving navigation in the Gulf of Finland.

THE FAMOUS MRS. ARD, the originator of the Promenade Concerts, died a few days ago at Antibes, near Paris, in his sixty-eighth year.

MR. DAVID RITCHIE, Secretary to the Committee of the Treasury at the Bank of England, was killed last week, in King William Street, by a cab falling from a wagon upon him.

SEVERAL PERSONS WERE DROWNED, a few days ago, in the Lake of Geneva, by the upsetting of a boat.

DIVINE SERVICE AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH, Colchester, has had to be suspended, owing to the building swarming with myriads of extremely minute insects, supposed to have proceeded from the vaults underneath the church, which were opened for recent alterations.

MR. WILLIAM REED, the late United States Envoy to China, has arrived in this country.

THE PROPOSAL to send a strong detachment of Royal Artillery to India has been frustrated. Sir de Lacy Evans had given notice of a resolution condemning this proceeding. Lord Stanley announced that the Government had yielded to the general opposition, and did not intend to forward any artillery to India.

LADY MORGAN, so well known in the world of letters, died peacefully, after a few days' illness, on Wednesday week, at her residence in Lowndes Street. She was born in Dublin about the year 1785.

A BURGULARY was committed, a few nights ago, in a nursery at Ardee.

THE KING OF BAVARIA has offered a prize of 200 Louis-d'or (about £96) for the best drama illustrative of German history. The competition is open to authors of all nations, and in order that it may be as extensive as possible, the time for sending in manuscripts is fixed as late as the end of November, 1860.

M. PROEDHON is about to publish (in Belgium) a pamphlet on the state of affairs in Europe.

SEVERAL PARISIEN JOURNALISTS affirm that Rossini has engaged to write a five-act opera for the Académie Impériale. It is also said that Verdi has undertaken to compose an opera for the English stage. We give these reports at what they are worth.

THE VICTORIA CROSS has been bestowed on the following:—Captain Thomas Bernhard Hackett; Private George Monger; Colour-sergeant Stewart M'Pherson; Drummer Thomas Pilon; Captain George Alexander Fleming; and Lieutenant Patrick Roddy, all for gallant actions in India.

THE GENTLEMEN deputed from the Republic of Haiti, Messrs. Meillon and Toussaint, were presented to her Majesty on Saturday, by Lord Malmesbury.

THE SUDDEN DEATH OF MADAME BOSIO at St. Peterburg is announced. She had just been appointed court singer.

COLONEL SYKES, M.P., has been unanimously elected chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company for the year ensuing.

M. FLOTOW, the author of the favourite opera of "Martha," has just completed another opera, "Le Muniere de Maran," which is about to be produced at Hanover. An illustrious dilettante, Prince Emilie de Wittgenstein, has composed a cantata on Uhland's ballad, "The Blind King," which has been performed with great éclat at Hanover.

A COINAGE of bronze one-cent pieces for Canada, has just been completed at her Majesty's Mint.

ABOUT thirty years ago, Mr. Thomas Fleming, shawl manufacturer, of Edinburgh, failed, paying a dividend of 9s. in the pound. On his death he left a statement of his liabilities with his widow, who undertook to be responsible for them. Recently the proceeds of the estate have been paid to the creditors.

THE INDIAN POST-OFFICE AUTHORITIES complain of the inconvenience of letters being sealed with wax, which melts and causes the adhesion of other letters.

OUR "DETECTIVES" have been doing good service to the Picture Gallery at Amsterdam, by recovering for it, in London, from the hands of thieves, a picture by Vanderweil, lately stolen thence, and valued at £2,000.

A "LIFE OF MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS," by Lamartine, is announced for publication by Messrs. Black and Co.

CORNETT, the man who murdered his wife, at West Bromwich, and then cut his own throat, has died in great agony.

GENERAL SIR W. NAPIER, the historian, is a confirmed invalid; he is only able to be lifted from one bed to another, and suffers continually.

THE PREFECTURE of the ancient city of Bourges has been burnt down; and the valuable records contained in it are destroyed.

THE FAMILY OF M. DE TOUGREVILLE contradict the report of his death. He is at the Isle de Hieres in a suffering state, but not worse than he has been for some time past.

TACHINARDI, father of Madame Persiani, and formerly a celebrated singer, died at Florence lately, at the age of eighty-four.

"There is so manifest a want of novelty in some of the popular tales of the Armstrong gun," says the "Mechanics' Magazine," "that we are surprised to learn that the granting of Sir William's patent has not been opposed. Opponents to it have been entered by several inventors."

AN INCREASE will shortly be made in the force of Royal Engineers serving in the Mediterranean.

THE MEDITERRANEAN REGIMENTS are to be reinforced. Probably some of the second battalions of regiments serving in India will be employed in this service.

HENRY MARSHALL, Esq., of Kent's Road, Brighton, who went down to Walsall a few days ago to a friend and contractor, the object of his visit being to see a printer, whose bill he left unpaid and who was a bankrupt, returned to his home.

MORRIS VESLEY is going to be MARRIED, at the age of seventy-five. The illustrious point has gained the heart of a widow, Madame Mary Anne Fuller, whose first husband was a Mr. de Bois-Richemont.

SOME SOLDIERS belonging to the Hungarian regiment "Ripon & Ash," stationed at Vienna, of their own accord arrested four Italians and a Frenchman, who had tried to persuade them to be faithful to their king. When these men were searched, it was discovered that they had about them a plentiful supply of watches, rings, and money.

THE BISHOP of Rochester is again indisposed. The Right Reverend Prelate's illness is said to be of a serious character.

THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, Great George Street, Westminster, will be open to the public by tickets on Easter Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, from ten to five o'clock. Tickets may be had of Messrs. Colnaghi, Messrs. Graves, Mr. Smith (of New Bond Street), Mr. Metcalf, stationer, Parliament Street, and Mr. Hafford, stationer, Great George Street.

A FORMIDABLE CONVOY of 18-PORCUPINE GUNS, and loaded ammunition wagons, together with the numerous train comprising four siege batteries, has departed from Walsingham station for Colchester and Chelmsford. The four batteries employed about 300 horses.

THE CALDER STEAM COAL MILLS, at Dewsbury, were destroyed by fire on Friday week.

A GRAND BANQUET is to be given to Sir John Lawrence, by subscription, among gentlemen connected with the civil, military, and naval services in India.

THE LOUNGER AT THE CLUBS.

It is said that the Carlton Club has fabulous wealth at its command for the forthcoming elections; that lately it has raised sovereigns in this quarter; and that any man who will contest a borough in the Conservative interest has only to ask, and he will have the means placed at his disposal. An enthusiastic Conservative assured me, that he knew that my Lord Derby had posted twenty thousand; and he mentioned other noble lords who had come down with the "ready" to a very large amount. Now, that a very productive "whip" has been made I do not doubt; but all these reports of extravagant sums being subscribed, I take *cum grano salis*; for the fact is, though the aristocracy of England is the wealthiest in the world, its wealth does not lie in ready cash. It has vast domains, wonderful houses, gorgeous furniture, and large incomes; but, as a rule, not much to spare at the year's end. There are some few of our nobility who are exceptions to the rule; the Marquis of Westminster and the Duke of Bedford, for instance (last year, by-the-by), who, by living considerably within their means, have always cash at command; but I doubt very much whether the bulk of our landed gentlemen are over-dish in this way. Still there can be no doubt a large sum has been raised, and that the Conservative party, feeling that this is its last chance, means to make the most desperate efforts to keep political power within its grasp. I am still of opinion, however, that it will not succeed. It may gain a few votes, but that it will secure a majority in the House, is, in my opinion, an impossibility.

The writs are all ready, and, I learn, will be despatched on Saturday night by post. If, therefore, the provincial mayors choose to proclaim the writs—as some of them did in 1857—on Sunday, the nomination-day may be on Thursday, and the polling take place on Friday. Otherwise the nomination cannot be until Friday, as there must be three clear days between the proclamation of the writ and the election. It will be very inconvenient to have the nomination on Friday, as then the polling will be on Saturday, which in most boroughs is market-day. The dissolution might have been gazetted on Tuesday evening and the writs despatched on the same night; but this is Passion Week, and it was felt that it would not be proper for a Conservative ministry to desecrate such a holy season, when all good people are, or are supposed to be, praying and fasting. And yet it would puzzle a casuist to tell why a prorogation or even a meeting of Parliament should be considered less a desecration than a dissolution! or why the last day of the week should be deemed less holy than the middle day. Perhaps, however, the spiritual advisers of the Government, like the Jews, reckon their holy days from sunset to sunset, and that, as the writs will not be despatched until after sundown on Saturday, there will be no desecration.

Wanted, a man with plenty of money. A large body of people in Lambeth are profoundly dissatisfied with Mr. Boulton. Telegrams have been despatched east, west, north, and south, but at present with no success. Do you know a Radical gentleman (latter qualification not very important), with a long purse (this is most important), who is ambitious to tack M.P. to the end of his name? If you do, send him at once to that notable quarter where lived, as the song says, the "Ratcatcher's Daughter," and he will be received with open arms. Bass, the pale ale man, has been invited, and as he is rather hard run at Derby, it was thought that he would snap at the offer; but he remembered, probably, what the honour of representing that odorous district cost Mr. Roupell, and also its inconvenient proximity to the House. He promptly refused; and at present it appears there is no alternative but to accept Mr. Boulton the porter. Brave old General Thompson is discarded by Bradford; why, it is difficult to say, for if ever member worked hard for his constituents, General Thompson has done so. He was always first in the House, and never left it till the Speaker rose to depart; and every week he reported progress through the Bradford paper to his constituents. He is 76 years old, it is true—and most men at this age ought to retire from public life; but the old General is as tough and hearty in body as most men are at 50, and his intellect is still clear and vigorous as ever; but General Thompson lives—not as most men do—for he eats no meat, and drinks no strong drinks. Well, if you must go, brave old man, fare thee well. What sort of men the new Parliament will turn up, I know not, but I will venture to say many a worse man will be in it than General Thompson. Richard Cobden is, however, it seems, to come back—as he ought to do. It is discreditable to England that a Parliament has passed away without him.

"Ye see yon birkie ca'd a lord,
Who struts and staves, and a' that."

Leaning against the pillar in the division lobby, talking to one of the same kidney of horses and dogs, the new prima donna, or the pet of the ballet, and has not an idea in his head—nor a noble aspiration in his soul; is it not a disgrace to us, that he and others like him should be in Parliament, and Richard Cobden say? Oh Englishmen, send Whigs, send Tories, send Radicals, send Courtists; but for heaven's sake don't send fools. Hundreds of new men are in the field—but in looking carefully over the list, I can find no man of mark amongst them. There are aspiring lawyers, successful contractors, wealthy manufacturers, merchants, and bankers—but not a single man remarkable for intellectual power has turned up yet.

Many years ago the entire season of Lent was a dead blank to the theatrical profession; a period during which several hundred persons were forbidden by law to exercise their calling, and compelled to exist,

Literature.

The Afternoon of Unmarried Life. By the Author of "Morning Clouds." London: Longman and Co.

There is something nationally characteristic in the way in which the French and the English, respectively, have begun to deal with a social difficulty, supposed to belong to what is called "over-civilisation": namely, the increased number of unmarried women. France sets up Michel to rehabilitate love. England, through its literature and its organisations, sets about disposing in the best way of its unappropriated women. It is easy to see that both the comment and the effort which are now so freely proffered, or at least only tentative; and safe to predict that the solution of the problem, when it comes, will be something that will leave our present endeavours and criticisms a long way behind. Meanwhile, as some one says, let us still steer by the north-star, if we are only going from London to Hull; and keep the obvious intention of nature in view. Any criticism, any organisation, that contemplates old maidhood as the ideal of nature, must of course be wrong. So must all female "strong-mindedness" that takes its stand upon the alleged absolute independence of women.

It is with more than the ordinary sincerity of a reviewer that we plead the unfitness of a second column, such as this, for the discussion of the question of the growth of celibacy (along with the growth of lice on the one hand, and deterioration of mind and body on the other) in our own country. "The Afternoon of Unmarried Life" does not force us to any such discussion. It is a series of essays addressed to unmarried women between thirty and fifty, telling them to make the best of their situation, and gathering around that advice all possible religious, ethical, and intellectual sanctions, which the great intelligence, pious feeling, and very extensive reading of the lady who writes the book can suggest. With the majority of readers, the volume will find, and deservedly, a hearty welcome, and we hope prove consolatory and strengthening.

We are disappointed to find that this acute and amiable lady (whose "Morning Clouds" will be remembered as a very delightful book for young ladies) has not seen through some erroneous commonplaces, which only want well looking at to be found out for what they are. She deals, for instance, in several places, with "selfishness," or "self-love," quite in the Hannah More style, as if it were a distinct moral quality, susceptible of being morally bombarded on direct and independent grounds, which everybody who will take the trouble to think may know is a spelling-book figment. To talk against selfishness in general, is precisely as vague as talking against wickedness in general. And let the casuist draw the line between the devotion of Bernard Palissy to his enamel, and that of some mother man to his eagle, or what you please! Our authors also speaks, in the usual vein, of letting by-gones be by-gones—a quite impossible thing, so long as time consists of a succession of moments. The first person who can get away from the past, will be he who has found out the trick of cutting off the eternity behind, by dropping a link in duration; and in doing that he will have destroyed his own thinking identity. And one other point. Is it the fact, as we are once again told in this volume, that clever men prefer to marry nonentities? We do not believe it. Let some one analyse the domestic fortunes of genius, from Pericles with his Aspasia, down to Mr. John Stuart Mill and the extraordinary woman whose loss he so touchingly refers to in his last work, and tell us if it be true that great men have, in fact, commonly wedded fools. Even if they have, it will remain to be proved that they have preferred it; for the most important act of a man's life is not that in which he chooses his first. When Milton made the archangel say—

"Love both her seat in reason and in passion,"

he uttered a Puritan wise-saw, which his own blunders should have made him ashamed of. Love, for the most part, hath her seat in unreason, and is exceedingly, and most impropriately, injudicious.

Occasionally, in turning these leaves, we miss that strong honest grip of ideas which is so essential to truthfulness of view. As in this passage about

HOPE AND EXPERIENCE.

"In our greatest prosperity we cannot avoid coming to these conclusions, that happiness is seldom intended to reach us by any expected means; and that, if sanguine anticipations are a help to cheerfulness, it is not previous instance of success that keeps them alive, but the obstinate strength of a natural instinct. We learn at last that happiness is the gift of God, independent of the means we employ for securing it; and that it is often given when it seems improbable that when it is reckoned upon as a certainty. Whether this lesson is taught by reiterated disappointments, or by the success that enables us to see the end of all perfection, it is equally powerful to disenchant; but not always salutary, not always producing in undevoted hearts the resignation to which it points."

But does anybody really believe that heaven jugsles with us by giving us "obstinate instincts," merely to keep us going, and dodges us through the maze of life with unattainable baits, only to teach us lessons? Does anybody really believe that happiness is a "gift" of heaven, "independent of means"? That happiness, in the detail, comes upon us unexpectedly, is often true, but the ends of hope in the lump are not attained without effort; and whosoever, having gained his ends, writes vanity of vanities over his pleasures, stands convicted of depraved desires, of an ungrateful heart, or of having mistaken an imaginary for a real fruition. In spite of some small tea-party sophistications such as the above, this is a very good book, and we cordially recommend it; adding, as a specimen of the author's delicate shrewdness of observation, the following paragraph upon

THE SOUNDING-BOARDS OF VIRTUE.

"Again, many of our virtues are so far the result of our position and surroundings, that it is sometimes the saddest part of a change of home in middle age, that it occasions a new sense of inferiority. You may lose, so to speak, those who were as a sounding-board to the best parts of your character; and, by removal from the neighbourhood that was rich in proofs of your kindness and benevolent exertion, you may feel placed among aliens, and begin insensibly to share the same doubts of your powers of usefulness, which ignorance of your character may cause in the minds of strangers."

We cannot, by the way, omit to express our surprise that so accomplished a lady as the present authoress should read the words, "The creature was made subject to vanity" (Romans, viii. 20), with a literal application to the individual human being, and the fable of that name. If she had taken the previous verse and Gen. iii. in connection, she would not have made such a slip.

Memoirs of the Court of George IV., 1820-1850. From Original Family Documents. By the Duke of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS, K. G. 2 vols. London: Hurst and Blackett.

By that sort of retrospective criticism which is to the past what fortune-telling is to the future, it would be possible to squeeze out of these very rapid "original family documents" something new, if untrue, about political and social intrigue, and the characters of some well-known personages of the period. But the general reader, who has no taste for seeing through millstones and reconstructing extinct animals on fancy principles, will find the present memoirs very dull reading. One impression they leave upon the mind—one "moral," is, that public opinion and common scandal are more accurate than doctrinaire historians and biographers would have us believe, and will well bear the test of scrutiny in comparison with "original family documents."

Another moral, not new, but worth repeating, is, that an exceedingly insignificant man may make a great noise in the world. What hundred-weights of discussion has George IV. been the cause of, and what a wretched nobody he was! If he had been born under another bed-tester he would have slunk through the back alleys of life, a disregarded sot, blackleg, and debauchee, with, probably, a tavern reputation as a picture-fancier and judge of horses and dogs, and as a "jolly good fellow." As it is, his "character" has been solemnly discussed scores of times by able men, and his name is the nucleus for more anecdotes than could be collected of Shakespeare, Milton, Oberlin, and Washington put together. His character, after all, was a very simple

one. He was capable of the easy virtues, and had, in their lowest combination only, some qualities of the artist. That sums up his good. His bad, which need not be particularised, was not active, energetic wickedness, but maudlin self-indulgence, aggravated into abominableness by means and opportunity. He has been somewhat over-abused of late: not that he was not a poor, paltry, disgusting, tipsy, fine-gentleman, and something worse—but that to apply strong moral criticism to such a creature is breaking a caterpillar on the wheel for besliming the cabbage. Let us have done with George IV. If the Duke of Buckingham can give us nothing new out of his store of "family" documents, we may at least leave this month to some future Mr. Fradon, grubbing among State-papers, and give our mind to subjects sweeter and wholesomer to think about.

It is amusing, to be sure, in turning over these pages, to see how our fathers used to write of exalted personages under the awful masks of initials and dashes. Thank heaven, we have no court scandals which compel us to mind our P's and Q's in speaking of the sovereign and her consort.

Evenings at the Microscope. By PHILIP HENRY GOSSE, F.R.S. London: The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

THE ear of a crab, the fin of a blounder, the tip of a mouse's hair, the vein in a frog's toe, the scales on a gnat's wing, the head of a cheese-mite, the jaw of a leech, the spiracle of a cockchafer, the sucker of a butterfly, the lower lip of a bee, the eyes of a spider, the battleship of *Polyommatus Alexia* (whatever he was, or is), the pushing-poles of *Serpula*, and the dumb-bells of *Holothuria* (which are obviously something in the gymnastic way), all these Mr. Gosse will show you (if you buy this book) in his own minutely-instructive way, magnified to that horrible degree of ugliness, which is audaciously called beautiful by those who are fond of going into "the marvels of creation" under the microscope. The volume is crowded with interesting facts, and capital woodcuts assist to render the work one of the most charming hand-books on the subject that we know of. It would make a capital present for studious young people.

The Boy's Own Toy-Maker. By E. LANDELLS. London: Griffith and Farran.

THIS is a "practical illustrated guide to the useful employment of leisure hours," by the author of the "Child's Own Toy-Maker," which was noted in these columns soon after its appearance. Mr. Landells, in a very interesting preface, puts this question: "Who would be the more useful person of two cast on Robinson Crusoe's desert island—the man who could only speak Greek and Latin, or the boy who in the hour of need could erect a little hut, or even construct a boat, from the lessons learnt in play hours?" On a desert island the more useful person of the two would decidedly be the constructor of huts, but not in a civilised country; and there is about as much chance, or less, of an Englishman being thrown on to a desert island, as there is of his being attacked by a botanist—in which latter case a knowledge of botany would certainly not avail him much. However, this has nothing to do with the merits of Mr. Landells's book, nor with the general truth of his introductory remarks. There can be no doubt but that children will derive much pleasure and much advantage from his volume. It will teach them to amuse themselves in a rational manner; will enable them to make, for a few shillings, toys and puzzles, which it would cost them many pounds to buy; and will help to develop in them the faculty of constructiveness. The secret of paper-toys, cardboard toys, toys of wood—in short, toys of all kinds—will be possessed by the fortunate children whose parents are kind and considerate enough to present them with "The Boy's Toy-Maker." We need scarcely add that the work is illustrated with all the necessary drawings and diagrams.

KING'S NEWTON HALL, one of the oldest and most interesting in Derbyshire, has been destroyed by fire.

SIR MOSES MONTAGUE has reached Rome, in the vain hope of convincing people there that they had no right to confiscate the boy Mortara from his family. He is comforted by the "Tablet" correspondent, by the assurance that the authorities will not "back up" so worthily a baronet in the Ghetto, as they have a perfect right to do in virtue of the treaties of 1855.

THE PRINCE OF WALES is permitted to announce that, in case of a war, the staff of the army will be composed as follows:—The Emperor, Commander-in-Chief; General Canby, Major-General; General Niel, General de Service; General Telford, Commissioner of the Artillery; General de Martigny, Chief of the Staff.

THE GOVERNMENT has resolved to take Mr. Waring's gun into consideration.

GENERAL THEATRICAL FUND.—The anniversary festival of this charity took place at the Freemasons' Tavern on Monday evening; upwards of 200 gentlemen sat down to dinner. Mr. Charles Mathews presided, and among those present were Lord Ebury, Sir W. Fraser, Mr. Buckstone, Mr. Tom Taylor, &c. After Mr. Mathews had enjoyed the opportunity of amusing the company with his laudable speeches, Mr. Buckstone (the treasurer) congratulated the company on the progress of the fund and the fair prospects which seemed opening up for it in the future. The funded stock, he said, amounted to upwards of £11,000; and the payments out of the yearly income included annuities of £30, £40, and £50 per annum, the large majority of the recipients being ladies. Any members whose period of subscription reached seven years became entitled to an annuity from the fund. The report for last year showed that the total income amounted to £1,320, while the expenditure fell short of that sum by £460. Towards the close of the evening the Secretary announced a list of subscriptions of upwards of £500.

THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE BOAT RACE.—A word which has no equivalent in any other European tongue—"pluck"—will best characterise the race between the Oxford and Cambridge crews, which on Friday week took place on the Thames over the accustomed course between Putney and Mortlake. Under a scorching sun, with a fierce North-wester and a mimic sea from its roughness and heady motion, these sixteen young gentlemen went to their work. The Oxford crew, who were by no means in favour, took the lead and kept it the whole way. The Cambridge boat was much too tight for the rough water, and it cost her crew immense exertion to pull her through the waves, which washed over her at every stroke. Just above Barnes Railway Bridge, the excitement of the spectators reached its climax; here the Cambridge boat was swamped, her crew struggling in the troubled river. Happily, life buoys, river boats, and assistance from the steamers attending the match, were at hand, and all were rescued—no thanks to the party on board the steamers, whose haste to be in at the death caused the heavy wash which had filled the unfortunate Cambridge water-boat. The condition of the men after their upset was rather distressing. They were stripped of their wet clothes, and they were not many; but the difficulty was, how to get dry ones—a difficulty not well got over till they arrived at Putney. The howl in the Cambridge boat (says the "Era") was carried helplessly ashore child out of the London Rowing Club boat.

HOW THEY CANVASSED AT FOME.—"The first 'move' of Lord Edward Thynne's party was to engage all the public-houses, and retain all the lawyers, with the exception of Mr. Hawkes, who has hitherto acted as Mr. Nicoll's agent. One trifling but significant circumstance that caught our attention was, that a little inn, which in years past was literally covered with blue placards, with 'Nicoll for ever,' and which boasted the sign of the 'Nicoll Arms,' now bore the placards of Lord Edward Thynne, and a sign altered to 'Live and let live'—a rather severe reflection."—*Sherborne Journal*.

A QUIET SPOT ON THE THAMES.

No river (with the single exception of the foul stream that washes Manchester) is comparable in filth to the Thames at London. But what can be more beautiful than the Thames at Richmond and Twickenham—in fact, from the first point at which it may be said to be free from the poisonous, blackening effect of the metropolitan drainage? On the banks of the Canal de l'Ouque, in Paris, stands a sign-post bearing this strange legend:—"On trouve ici la tranquillité et le poisson en abondance" (Tranquillity and fish in abundance are found here). The inscription reads like a bitter sarcastic invitation to commit suicide, but it is in fact nothing more than a piece of information offered to amateurs of fishing by the proprietor of a neighbouring hostelry. In addition to the beauty of the scenery, what tranquillity and what an abundance of fish might be found at Mr. Gosling's "Quiet Spot on the Thames?"

as they best might, on the narrow savings which they had accumulated, or to starve. A change in the law reduced the extreme rigour of this despotism, and under the new and milder enactment, professors of the dramatic art were only deprived of two nights' salary for every week for six weeks, the theatre being closed on Wednesdays and Fridays. By the intervention of certain liberal-minded members of the Legislature, headed, I believe, by Mr. Duncombe, the member for Finsbury, the draconian law was finally altogether repealed, and Passion-Week is now the only period during the year in which the actor is legally obligated to exercise his art. Then do the entertainers, lecturers, jugglers, astronomers, and such-like emerge in all their glory.

There is a public in the metropolis which will be amused despite registered intervention, and the law is properly stridened to its utmost to allow of their inclinations being complied with. This year London abundant harvest of amusement. Mr. and Mrs. German had engaged the Olympic Theatre, Mr. and Mrs. Howard Paul retained Salliers' Wells, and that wonderful Oratory, belonging to Mr. Adams, which is associated with our childhood's reminiscences, will probably outlast us (where does it go to during the rest of the year) to have been displayed at the Haymarket. Names here, all well known, all patronised by first-rate people, all individually collectively, offering a guarantee for the respectability of the entertainment. Newspaper advertisements and public placards herald the approaching of these various amusements a fortnight beforehand. Serious expenses in the shape of printing, advertising, and rent, are incurred, but it is not until the very day on which the theatres are to be opened, on the speculation of these hard-working and industrious people, that a letter is received, dated from the Lord Chamberlain's office, and signed "William Bodham Donne, licensor of plays," to the effect that performances within the walls of the theatres during Passion Week are illegal, and that none of the above-named buildings have a license under which the proposed entertainment could be given. It is such is the state of the law is in itself a matter of regret; that it may dress himself in any absurd costume he pleases, and laugh, or wink, and howl in the back room of a tavern, which calls itself a public-house, and is "licensed according to the 25th of George II.," that "Donne" may give his "Skits and Sketches" at the Polytechnion. He is drinking under the green-briar-covered table, and re-appearing in that awful and mythical personage, "whom, with your leave, I shall have the honour to introduce to you;" that minstrels, serenadeurs, or comedians, coloured opera troupes, and all the variety of yuck-acting black-faced minims, great perfect liberty and license to do what they like; while genuine and accredited artists are exposed to the attacks of common informers, because they appear in the most respectable and most available locale for their performances, a theatre—is manifestly preposterous and absurd. But that the licenser of plays, a well-recommended and not over-worked gentleman, whose duty one might consider it was to look out for forthcoming novelties in that world of the moribund and true guidance of which have been placed under his charge, should omit to give the artists the slightest warning, until, as he must have known, all the preliminary expenses were entered into, is a dereliction of duty which requires much more serious notice. The very existence of his office is a sham and an absurdity, which probably another generation will not tolerate; but while it exists, it should, at all events, be filled by some one who, with a proper regard to the duties which he is paid to discharge, should have some feeling for those whose success or failure are dependent on his nod.

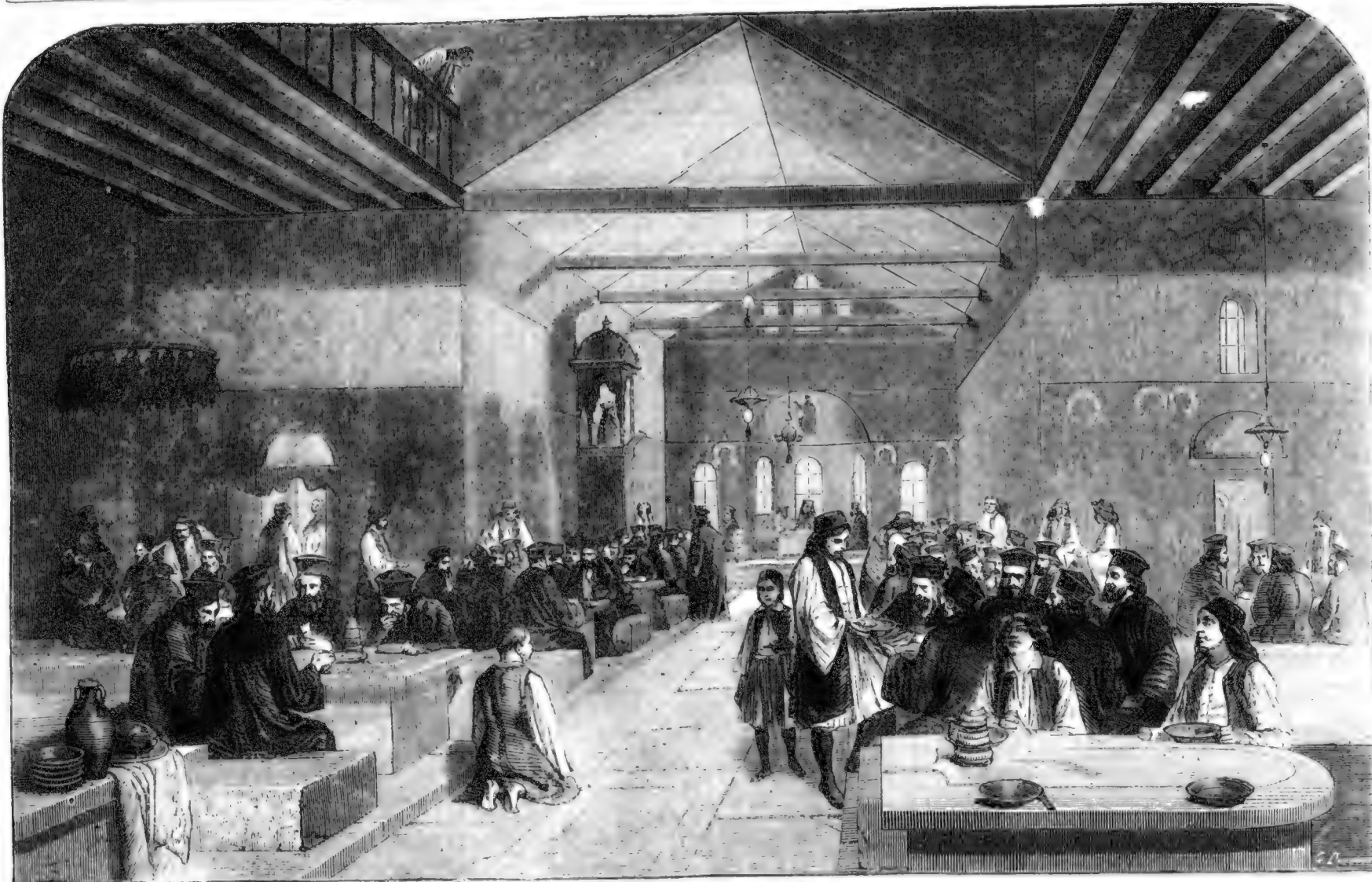
You will recollect my telling you, some fortnight since, of the army correspondent who are perpetually worrying me to the name of a correspondent of "Adrian Bode," and my remark that I was writing from a correspondent of the country, and named Mr. Higgins, which your correspondent did me the honour to reproduce as Higgs. I see that the

H. Anders has taken upon himself to make the same assertion in the "Times," and that he has received a very smart rap from the real author for his ignorance and impertinence. After all, it does not matter in the least by whom they were written; and if the author chooses to write good books by stealth and blush to find them anonymous, assuredly he has the right so to do, and the public need only complain when he does so simply. In the way, you will observe that "George Elliot" is the pseudonym of the red Simon P. J., does not deny any acquaintance with Mr. Higgins; he merely says—"That gentleman never saw a line of these works until they were printed, nor had he any knowledge of them whatever." Until they were printed? Perhaps, as in the case of the "Vestiges" and other mysterious books, a person totally unconnected with the authorship corrected the proofs, and hence the mistake. It is odd that Mr. Higgins—if there be a Mr. Higgins—has no sign in the matter.

The fatal accident to Mr. Ritchie, who was killed by the fall of an empty wine punch-bowl from a van belonging to the South-Western Railway, should be productive of a more serious notice than mere classification in the journalist's weekly category of "accidents and crimes." No one accustomed to walk in London streets but must have noticed the dangerous manner in which these railway wagons are loaded, and the reckless insolence displayed by their drivers. Piled as high as the first-floor windows with heavy bales of goods, with tottering shelves of baskets, or, as in the present instance, with enormous casks, seemed in the slightest and least efficient manner, driven for the most part by lads scarcely twenty years of age confident in their own strength and utterly regardless of the consequences to anything with which they may be brought in contact, these huge and clumsy machines swing at a rapid pace through the most crowded thoroughfares. The adage of the prize ring holds true—"It's the weight that kills"—and nothing has done against the bulk of a Pickford or a Chaudin and Horne. The secret Hansom cabman is forced to acknowledge their supremacy; and still we get another D'Oursy to cut the wheel off a dray with his own cab-holt, and call it "the triumph of mind over matter," we must submit to the indignity, but it is a matter which Parliament, or at all events the Magistracy, ought to take up.

Another point which calls for authoritative interference is the presence of steamers at the Oxford and Cambridge regatta. To the swell caused by the evolutions of the river steamers on Friday last, may be ascribed in a great measure the swamping of the Cambridge boat; an event of little moment just now, but which if it do not finally result in serious consequences to some of the immersed gentlemen will be surprising. A man in a profuse state of perspiration and excitement is not throwing headlong into an ice-cold stream without feeling somewhat more than the first temporary inconvenience. The whole thing is wrong; there should be rowed later in the season; no steamers should be allowed to come within a certain distance of the contending boats; and the boats in which the race is rowed should be considerably stronger and more capable of resistance. No one who has ever handled an oar would like to see eight men tugging in a barge; but there is a maximum of absurdity, and a minimum of sense, which modern boating-men appear to have reached.

Mr. Shirley Brooks's editorial connection with the "Literary Gazette" has ceased, and what was intended to be the feature of the paper, "The Council of Ten," which he contributed, is discontinued. We do not imagine that the speculation in its present hands has been so great a success as was anticipated, and perhaps this is to be accounted for by the fact that the new conductors do not appear to have aimed at the class for whom, to my humble judgment at least, the "Literary Gazette" was intended, and among whom it would still have commanded a good circulation. These are not country gentlemen, clergymen, scientific savants, and such like, who wish to subscribe to a literary journal, and yet are frightened by the dash, the severity, and the plain-speaking of the "Athenaeum." Among such as I have described the "Literary Gazette" originally had its seat, and had the talent which has recently been infused into it addressed itself to them, to doubt it would have prospered, but the conversions, *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, between a caustic bonnet, a heavy professor, a much-puffed-up dramatic critic, a dull merchant, an insistent Irishman, and a washed-out Foreign-Office clerk, with perpetual reference to London scenes and customs, must have been outer darkness to them.



REFECTORY IN A GREEK MONASTERY.



A QUIET SPOT ON THE THAMES.—(FROM A PICTURE BY W. W. GOSLING, IN THE EXHIBITION OF THE SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS.—SEE PRECEDING PAGE.)

A REFECTORY IN A GREEK MONASTERY.

This is a faithful representation of a phase of monastic life, not the least pleasing, in the dull routine of pious idleness in which monkish bodies spend their days. To keep the mind as much as possible from the carnal occupation to which the wants of the flesh reduce mankind, a reverend father discourses at length on the sinfulness of gluttony, and impresses on his brethren the necessity of abstemiousness. We would not like to suggest that the reverend father has got something savoury prepared for him, which he intends to discuss quietly, when the rest of the brotherhood have satisfied their cravings. However, to the best of our belief, the Greek monks live in a most simple and primitive manner, and they are totally unacquainted with the generous existence enjoyed by religious bodies in other countries.

THE FRENCH IN COCHIN CHINA.

News has been received from Admiral Rigault de Genouilly, announcing the capture of the citadel of Saigon on the 17th of February, by the united French and Spanish forces in Cochin China, and the destruction of a number of forts. After a week's work, the combined forces remained in possession of twenty-five leagues of the river, defended by three stockades and eleven forts, in addition to the town and citadel. The French-Spanish forces had only a few men wounded; and the health of the expedition is said to be satisfactory. Two hundred pieces of cannon in iron and bronze, and a corvette and seven junks, fell into the hands of the combined army. In the citadel was a complete arsenal, and the number of stands of arms is computed at 20,000. There were also about 85,000 kilogrammes of powder, and projectiles in proportion; a large quantity of military equipments; rice sufficient for the support of 6,000 to 8,000 men for a year; and a military chest, containing about 130,000 francs in the money of the country. The French were engaged, when the report left, in mining the citadel.

In the absence of the French Admiral from Tourane, the Cochinchinese attacked the remaining detachment of the French naval force there; but were repulsed with a loss of 150 men, and several of the batteries destroyed.

EARLY SPRING IN BRIE.

Spring in France frequently comes much earlier than spring in England; and in no place does Nature wear her robe of verdure more smilingly than in Brie. The old district of Brie formerly formed part of the provinces of Champagne and of Ile-de-France, and is rich in the ruins and legends of the past. But it is not in the reminiscences of its seigneurs alone that it rejoices; it has modern pretensions to fame, founded on nothing



BOATWOMAN IN THE BAY OF TOURANE.

more nor less than the excellence of its cheeses. Who has been in France and not tasted of those creamy pancakes, which, with a salad and glass of Bordeaux, make a breakfast that none need hold in contempt? Our engraving is from a drawing by Jacque, the Creswick of French landscape painters, and, as a seasonable illustration, we present it to our readers.

PRINCE ALFRED'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

PRINCE ALFRED'S visit to the Holy City appears to have made a considerable sensation. "From the battlements of the city the sight was picturesque in the extreme: soldiers grouped everywhere, with piled arms, waiting the signal to line the roads; people of every nation and language out waiting in thousands. The weather was intensely hot, and an east wind blowing. It grew dark, however, and the Prince had not arrived, but at length the roar of the cannon salute announced that the Royal visitor was at the Pacha's pavilion, which had been pitched at some distance from the city, and immediately huge lanterns were despatched from the English consulate to meet the procession at the city gate. The soldiers lined the street up to the consul's door, and then the great guns from the fortifications announced that for the first time in the history of the world an English Prince was within the walls of Jerusalem. The Prince dismounted at the consular residence. The Pacha presently departed, but the next day dined privately with the Prince at the consulate. His Royal Highness declined any reception of deputations."

The Royal party paid a visit to the mosque of Omar, and on the next day set out for Hebron. "It was a very pretty sight indeed. In front were two of the cavalry drummers, fellows in the most original costume with conical felt caps, beating the little kettle drums at their saddle-bows with leathern straps, making the valleys ring again. At Nar Elias, the Greeks of the convent had laid down carpets and placed an arm chair for the Prince, under the olive trees, where there is a view on the right hand of Bethlehem, and on the left of Jerusalem. The convent bell was rung famously, and a crowd of Greek and Russian pilgrims were gathered to see the Prince. But at Bethlehem his reception presented a most wonderful and interesting sight. The whole population, in their picturesque dresses, turned out to see and welcome his Royal Highness, and his numerous cavalcade rode through a crowd of eager people, men in their red and white turbans, with holiday robes of scarlet cloth, women and girls in dark blue and red, with gold coins on their heads, and bracelets of gold and silver on their arms, on every terrace and roof, and many a prayer of 'God preserve him to his mother,' or 'God lengthen his days,' was heard in an audible voice by the bystanders in their vernacular



EARLY SPRING.—(A SKETCH IN BRIE, BY C. JACQUE.)

Arabic. One man even ran forward and spread his garments in the way, but the Prince, with delightful tact, turned his horse aside so as to avoid treading on them. As the party proceeded the mass of people followed, so that when it reached the Church of the Nativity, the fine open space in front of it was thronged. Here the party were met by the Latin, Greek, and Armenian monks, bearing huge lighted wax tapers. All the places of interest, including the Grotto of the Nativity and the dwelling-place of Jerome, were duly visited. After resting for a short time, the party proceeded to Urías, supposed to be the site of Solomon's gardens, and now the industrial farm, belonging to the Jerusalem Agricultural Association.

"Hence they went towards Solomon's Pools, the goldfinches pouring forth their song from every branch and thicket. These pools are splendid pieces of water, the largest capable of accommodating two first-rates. At Hebron the troops were drawn out, and, after the colonel had paid his respects, the party moved on—not to the town, but westwards to the great oak, called Abraham's oak, where tents were pitched. Presently a pack of jackals began to cry among the vineyards, and their voices had hardly ceased when the plaintive cry of the plover was heard, and then came the barking of a fox, the hooting of an owl with a voice like a bell, and all other sounds special to an encampment. Next morning the party returned to Jerusalem by a different road, first visiting the unfinished building called Abraham's house, supposed to have been begun by David before removing to Zion. On Monday, the 28th (ult.), his Royal Highness left Jerusalem for the Dead Sea, after four or five days' stay. As soon as the sun was risen crowds assembled to see him depart, and the terraces and domes of the houses were covered with spectators. The troops lined the street, and when his Royal Highness left the consulate the Castle guns fired a salute of 21 guns, and another when he passed out of the St. Stephen's Gate. At the Garden of Gethsemane the heads of the Armenian and Greek churches were waiting to take leave of the Prince, who proceeded then to the Dead Sea, and thence by Bethel to Damascus."

PRETTY OCCUPATION FOR LEGISLATORS.—Mr. Dwyer, the editor of a paper published in Portland, Oregon, gives a description of a fight between himself and Mr. Lasater, both members of the Legislature of that State. He says:—"In the House Lasater repeated and re-repeated that we were a liar and a blackguard, whereupon we did take our inkstand from the desk and hurled it in his face, intending it as a rebuke for his gross insults. As to the fight instantly ensuing in the House we have nothing to say, save that Lasater did not seriously injure us at that time, nor gain many laurels. More than half an hour had intervened, when, as we were quietly passing down the principal street, we were met by Lasater, who seized us by the throat, at the same time planting a heavy blow upon our forehead, and rushed us into the door of a store, where we both fell upon some open shoe-boxes. Lasater, on top, still grasping our throat. After a few blows he inserted the thumb of his right hand into our socket. At this time, by a desperate or superhuman effort, we released his grasp from the throat, and his thumb from the eye, and fell flat upon the floor. Lasater then seized us by the hair, and attempted to gouge our other eye out, which we prevented by turning our face close to the floor, and locking our fingers and pressing our hands close to our eyes. After several fruitless efforts to insert his thumb into our right eye, he commenced pounding us on the back of the head with his fist. While all this was going on there, a large number of cowardly ruffians and dogs crowded around and prevented our friends from rendering us any assistance. After we supposed they might be satisfied with the beating he had given us, we requested that he should be taken off, which was done, as we learn, by those kind and humane hands who had kept our friends from interfering, and who, supposed, no doubt, one or both of our eyes were gouged out of their sockets, and that ample justice had been done to gratify their revenge."

ELECTION RIOT IN FINISBURY.—A crowded meeting assembled on Monday night, at the British School Room, Copper Street, City Road, to hear an address from Sir S. Morton Peto, one of the candidates for the representation of Finsbury. A glance at the character of the meeting, and the strong disputes which were being carried on in every part of the great room, presented unmistakable evidence that the Baronet was not to have it all his own way; and upon the appearance of Sir Samuel, an outburst indicated that the proceedings would be merely in dumb show. Amidst a scene of indescribable uproar, the candidate presented himself over and over again without the slightest chance of being heard. At one time, at least fifty excited men and boys were standing on the benches vociferating at the top of their voices, while close against the platform a fight was taking place. One person was seized with such a sudden fit of patriotism, that for some ten minutes he stood on his legs shaking his fist in the face of the candidate. Bills were held up, circulars were thrown about, and there was an apprehension the affair would end in an indiscriminate fight. At length the Baronet retired from the room, fortunately escaping the violence which it was the manifest intention of some present to inflict on him. At the same time, a man jumped upon the chairman's table, and attempted still further to excite the meeting. A general melee ensued, which terminated by many of the gas-fittings being torn down, and the crowd dispersing in the darkness. Some discontent among Sir S. Peto's workmen, or men who have been discharged, is supposed to have been the cause of the uproar.

PROBABILITY OF MARRYING.—A table inserted in a paper in the "Assurance Magazine" shows that, in the first two quinquennial periods—20-25 and 25-30—the probability of a widower marrying in a year is nearly three times as great as that of a bachelor. At thirty, it is nearly four times as great; from thirty to forty-five, it is five times as great; and it increases, until at sixty the chance of a widower marrying in a year is eleven times as great as that of a bachelor. It is curious to remark, from this table, how confirmed either class becomes in its condition of life—how little likely, after a few years, is a bachelor to break through his settled habits and solitary condition; and, on the other hand, how readily in proportion does a husband contract a second marriage, who has been deprived prematurely of his first partner. After the age of thirty, the probability of a bachelor marrying in a year diminishes in a most rapid ratio. The probability at thirty-five is not much more than half that at thirty, and nearly the same proportion exists between each quinquennial period afterwards.

SUDDEN WHITENING OF THE HAIR.—A correspondent of the "Medical Times" having asked for authentic instances of the hair becoming gray within the space of one night, Mr. D. P. Parry, staff surgeon at Aldershot, writes the following very remarkable account of a case, of which he says he made memoranda shortly after the occurrence:—"On February 19, 1858, the column under General Franks, in the south of Oule, was engaged with a rebel force at the village of Chamda, and several prisoners were taken: one of them, a sepoy of the Bengal army, was brought before the authorities for examination, and I, being present, had an opportunity of watching from the commencement the fact I am about to record. Divested of his uniform, and stripped completely naked, he was surrounded by the soldiers, and then first apparently became alive to the dangers of his position; he trembled violently, intense horror and despair were depicted in his countenance, and although he answered the questions addressed to him, he seemed almost stupefied with fear; while actually under observation, within the space of half-an-hour, his hair became gray on every portion of his head, it having been, when first seen by us, the glossy jet black of the Bengalee, aged about twenty-four. The attention of the bystanders was first attracted by the sergeant, whose prisoner he was, exclaiming, 'He is turning gray,' and I, with several other persons, watched its progress. Gradually but decidedly the change went on, and a uniform grayish colour was completed within the period above-named."

OUR NATIONAL DEFENCES.—A meeting was held on Saturday evening at St. Martin's Hall, to take this subject into consideration. Sir C. Napier occupied the chair, and regretting that the meeting was so thinly attended (there were about a hundred persons in the hall), proceeded to compare the state of the army and navy of England with those of other countries at the present moment. France possessed a fleet all but as large as that of England. She had an army of 500,000 men, ready to march at a moment's notice. She had also a large number of commercial steamers. She had on the north and west coasts 180 steam vessels of all sizes, and in the Mediterranean 150. There was nothing to prevent an arbitrary and despotic government like that of France from laying an embargo on those vessels and marching the men on board. In a week she could throw an overwhelming force into this country. It was not even necessary for France to invade this country. All she need do was to send a fleet off the Scilly Islands. She would thus intercept all the American, West Indian, and Mediterranean trade, and give this country a blow from which she could not recover for many years. Sir Duncan McDougall moved the first resolution, expressing the fears of the meeting that the country was inadequately armed; and General Taylor moved, and Captain Sleight seconded, the next resolution—"That, in pursuance of the first resolution, a memorial be at once presented to the Queen, and petitions to both Houses of Parliament, as soon as they re-assemble, urging the necessity of maintaining a sufficient Channel fleet; of calling out the necessary militia, and enrolling volunteer rifle and other corps, for the defence of the country." Both resolutions were carried unanimously; and after an address from Sir Allan McNab, who spoke in high praise of the militia in Canada, the meeting separated.

OPERA AND CONCERTS.

THE death of Madame Bosio has thrown a gloom over the whole of the musical world. Mr. Gye has lost the chief ornament of his *troupe*, and Europe has been deprived of its most charming singer. No voice had such purity, liquidity, and sweetness of tone, as that of the lady whose early death we now deplore. No vocalist was less likely to throw a mob into raptures, or so certain to be under-estimated by that enormous and indolent class who have ears but hear not; but none will be so long and so vividly remembered by her appreciators, nor is it possible to replace her in such parts as *Giulia* and *Norina*—nor, above all, in the hearts of those who were fully sensible of her rare qualities, and who had been touched by the accent of her exquisite and sympathetic voice. That she was the most accomplished soprano of the day was well-known to every one, but her most fascinating qualities were not the result of art. The true charm of her singing consisted, first in the native melodiousness of her voice, and, secondly, in a certain manner which could not have been learned, which cannot be described, and which it would be as difficult to analyze as the perfume of a flower. Because this artist executed the most difficult passages as easily and naturally as a bird sings, it seems to have been hastily concluded that in simple expressive music she would be less successful (our friends the birds, it must be remembered, fail entirely in cantabile movements, or, rather, they never attempt them). But "*Martha*" was produced, and Madame Bosio, as all her friends knew she would, gave the "*Last Rose of Summer*" with a sweetness and simplicity quite unattainable by any one else, and with an emotion which at once communicated itself to every one in the theatre. She was certainly not a great actress, for she never ran across the stage on her knees, or aimed blows at the tenor, nor indulged in those tragic screams of which the German operatic *tragediennes* possess the secret. But her voice could express every shade of emotion, and hence her singing was thoroughly dramatic. In tender, pathetic parts, especially in those which demand refinement as an essential element, Angiolina Bosio could not be approached. She was to Mademoiselle Piccolomini, who took many of the same characters, what a princess is to a waiting-maid; and between her singing and that of one or two German vocalists who are allowed to indulge in their grimaces and their noise in our concert-rooms, there was as much difference as exists between the song of a nightingale and the grating of a saw. Madame Bosio was one of the four great singers discovered by the managers of the Royal Italian Opera—the other three being Albani, Tamberlik, and Dudié. That Mr. Gye's establishment will suffer by the loss of such a consummate vocalist cannot be doubted; indeed, every one who ever heard her will suffer. The only thing to do at present is to avoid those operas of which Madame Bosio was wont to represent the heroines, to give Madame Lotti as many new parts as possible, to produce Meyerbeer's "*Pardon de Ploerme*" without unnecessary delay, and in the meanwhile to depend to a great extent on those "*grand operas*" which are represented nowhere so magnificently as at Covent Garden. The Easter season will commence admirably. Rossini's "*Gazza Lutra*" is to be given for the first performance, with Madame Lotti as Ninetta, Madame Santier Didié as Peppo, Ronconi as the Podesta, Debassini as Ferdinando, Tagliafico as Fabrizio, Polonini as Georgio, and Gardoni as Gianetto.

Mr. E. T. Smith is to open on Monday with "*La Sonnambula*." The *Amina* of the evening will be Miss Balfe, who, it may be remembered, made her *début* in that part at the Lyceum before the rebuilding of Covent Garden. Badiali ("for this occasion," say the bills) will be the Count; and the new tenor, Mongini, will make his first appearance as Elvino. We hear various opinions as to Mongini's talent, but all who have heard him are agreed as to the beauty and power of his voice. It is said that he is an unequal singer, but it appears quite certain that on his good evenings he is really great, and he has the advantage of being very young. We cannot be expected to speak one by one of all the new vocalists whose names appear in Mr. Smith's programme for the season, but we may mention that among the sopranos the management appears to count very much on Mademoiselle Sarepta. This young lady, whose family name is Bujanovics (pronounced Booyanovitch), is the daughter of a Hungarian nobleman—Baron Carnel Bujanovics de Agge Telek. "Mademoiselle Sarepta," we are told, "from her earliest infancy, gave extraordinary proofs of her bent for music, and at the age of seven she sang in the churches. This was her greatest delight. Her first masters recommended a visit to Paris, in order to complete her musical education; at length Madame de Bujanovics yielded to her daughter's entreaties, and brought her to the French capital. For the last two years she has studied under a well-known and celebrated maestro (M. Alary) with the most extraordinary perseverance and assiduity, and on the day she attained her eighteenth year she made her *début* as Leonora in '*Il Trovatore*,' at the Italian Opera."

The articles of the Paris journals on the first appearance of this young lady have been collected, and on the whole they are highly favourable to her as a singer, while as to her beauty there are no two opinions. Some of the notices are very amusing. The "*Patrie*" tells us that "a few isolated high notes here and there revealed her youthful and fresh tones," but that "her lower notes, so limpid and so pure, completely disappeared." This, adds the writer, "was an inevitable result in her position;" and we are then told how Tamberlik was so afraid of the French public that he was "eight days indisposed before he appeared in '*Otello*!'" "*L'Europe Artistique*" informs us that Mdlle. Sarepta suddenly appeared on the stage exclaiming, "Anch'io son pittoresca!" and that "the young enthusiast ran great risk of falling, nay, of death itself." The *débutante's* singing-master, as we have already mentioned, was M. Alary, "who," says the facetious M. Fiorentino, in the "*Constitutionnel*," "never sinned on the score of temerity"—in ironical allusion, we presume, to that maestro's arrangement of "*Don Giovanni*." The "*Presse Théâtrale*" speaks of Mdlle. Sarepta as "a mignon fairy foot, which had never before trod the boards of a theatre;" and the "*Resident Correspondent* of the '*Sunday Times*'" tells us simply that she achieved a triumph, "though badly supported by M. Mario." Poor Mario! that he should have fallen to this!

Mendelssohn's oratorio of "*Elijah*" was given during Passion Week at St. Martin's Hall, under the direction of Mr. John Hullah, who had an excellent orchestra at his command; and the well-known chorus composed of the members of the first upper singing school. The principal singers engaged were Madame Rudersdorff, Miss Fanny Rowland, Miss Palmer, Miss Bradshaw, Mr. Wilby Cooper, Mr. Santley, Mr. Evans, and Mr. Barnby. The performance was most satisfactory, and many of the choruses were given with magnificent effect. The solo vocalists also acquitted themselves meritoriously, especially Mr. Wilby Cooper and Mr. Santley. We have not sufficient space for an enumeration of the other places at which either the "*Messiah*" or "*Elijah*" have been performed during the past week.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.—We understand that the Prize Drawings of the Metropolitan District Schools of Art, will be exhibited during the Easter holidays, at the South Kensington Museum, in the rooms provisionally prepared for the reception of the Vernon and Turner Pictures. The class-rooms of the Training School will also be open during the holidays, for the inspection of the public.

THE EXPLOSION AT THE HOUNSLOW POWDER-MILLS.—The jury concerned in the investigation of this calamity assembled again on Tuesday, when it was stated that the chemical experiments of Messrs. Thomson and Faraday had not yet been carried out; and that this might be done satisfactorily, it was resolved to adjourn the inquiry for a month. No witnesses were examined on this occasion.

CREW SAVED FROM A SINKING SHIP.—Her Majesty's troop-ship *Perseverance* ran into the bark *Ava* on Sunday night, off the Lizard Point, at ten o'clock. She was laden with coals, and soon began to fill, and in ten minutes sunk entirely, carrying down with her the bowsprit of the steamer, which, having got entangled in her rigging, was broken short off. The steamer fortunately carried two of Clifford's boats, fitted so as to be lowered instantly; and by the rapidity with which these were worked, the captain and all hands, fifteen in number, were saved from going down with the ship.

LAW AND CRIME.

WE last week recorded the finding, upon the sands near Ramsgate, the body of a man, supposed to have been murdered. The mystery which attached to his fate was certainly not mitigated by the witnesses' narration of the circumstances attending the discovery of the body. It was said that not only had the fingers of the left hand, but the hand itself, been amputated. The surgeon who examined the body could not tell whether this had been done before or after death. It was stated that the body could not have been washed to its position by the tide. It was not mentioned whether a stab wound was found to have penetrated to the heart of the deceased, had or had not perjured his clothes. No blood was found near the body, and no intention appeared of a struggle. The man's pockets had been rifled, and his fingers were found strewn about at a distance from his remains. Taking all these circumstances together, the case appeared as inexplicable as might well be conceived. Subsequent particulars tend, however, to dissipate the mystery. A hatchet, apparently the instrument by which the hand and fingers had been severed, was found upon the beach, and this is now proved to have been purchased by the deceased himself. Two of his fingers had been amputated previously at the first and second joints. His peregrinations have been traced from his leaving Southampton on the 31st of March, to his arrival at Dover on the 7th of April. At Dover he bought the hatchet, and described himself as a Russian, though he now appears to have been a German. On his road from Dover to Deal, he threw away a Bible, printed in German, and this appears to have been one of a series of misadventures by which he attempted to conceal his identity. The next was to cause his beard and whiskers to be shaved off. He was afterwards seen at various places about Ramsgate, and finally on the beach, where he was last seen, at about half-past eight o'clock on the 10th instant, carrying his carpet-bag, walking rapidly, and in a sulky, moody manner. At six o'clock next morning he was found dead, as already related. His wearing apparel, whether or not having formed the last contents of his carpet-bag, was found about the beach; and it was seen that the marks indicating his name or initials had been carefully cut or picked out. It is found now that most probably the body had been washed by the tide (a fact accounting for the absence of blood), inasmuch as the tide, between the time when deceased was last seen on the beach and that of the finding of his body, had risen beyond the spot where the corpse was found. His boot-tops had been cut shorter, as if to destroy a name written on the upper part of the inside. Altogether the circumstances now appearing seem to point to the conclusion that the unhappy man stripped himself upon the shore, walked into the sea, cut off his already-mutilated fingers to prevent possible identification thereby, and stabbed himself to the heart. From the fact of his pockets being empty, it is conjectured that these had been pillaged by some persons casually passing along the beach; but it seems perhaps more probable that the unfortunate man himself flung away into the sea everything by which he thought he might be traced. The police authorities appear to be agreed in regarding the case as one of self-mutilation and suicide.

Several cases have appeared during the last week, in which attorneys have figured ignominiously. This phenomenon is scarcely to be attributed so much to any peculiar epidemic, as to the commencement of term, which is the proper period for motions to strike delinquents off the roll. The Court of Queen's Bench deprived Mr. Robins, a gentleman, one, &c., of his right of practising, for having converted to his own use a sum of £15, entrusted to him to pay legacy duty. Lord Campbell, in reply to an appeal for mercy on behalf of the solicitor, remarked that some mercy ought to be shown to suitors. Mr. Hunt, another solicitor, was similarly served for misappropriation of a trust fund of about £3,000. "I think," said Lord Justice Knight Bruce, "that this gentleman had better not remain on the roll." A third, Mr. Francis Blake, lately of an eminent London firm, was removed from the Insolvent Court for two years for having given a worthless mortgage for a sum of £1,000, and another, of similar character, for £1,500.

The following cases are reported consecutively in a contemporary of Tuesday last. William Smith stole a watch from a person in a crowd, and when captured by the man whom he had robbed, bit "a lump" out of his hand. The Lord Mayor committed the prisoner to jail for twenty-one days, because the watch was not found upon him, he having passed it to a confederate. Had he not performed this act of prudence, his Lordship would have committed him for trial. A sot, for stealing a wine glass in a drunken freak, was sent for twenty-one days' hard labour by Mr. Paynter. A woman, of the drunken maniacal class, was committed, for creating a disturbance, and breaking a pane of glass with her shoe, to hard labour for one month by Mr. Yardley.

The defendants in the case of alleged illegal sale of army commissions have been committed, upon bail, for trial. The immediate personal negotiations with the Duke of Cambridge are said to have been managed by one Colonel Steinbach, who has proceeded to and still remains at Bremen, in spite of pressing invitations to return and render his services in the matter. A remarkable incident in the hearing, was the examination of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, Commander-in-Chief of her Majesty's forces.

THE SHIP-CHANDLERS OF TRIESTE have received orders to be prepared for the arrival of English men-of-war.

THE SALARIES of the Roman Catholic bishops and chaplains in India are to be increased. The former are to receive 500 rs. per mensem; and the latter are to receive 150 rs. and 200 rs., instead of 100 rs. and 150 rs., as at present.

THE DIVORCE AND MATRIMONIAL CAUSES COURT.—A return shows the business transacted in this court between January 11th, 1858, and the 28th of last month. It appears that during that time there were 288 petitions for dissolution of marriage—184 presented by the husband and 104 by the wife. In 87 cases dissolution was decreed and in 6 it was refused. The number of cases undefended was 143. In no case was the petitioner examined; 134 cases are now set down for trial; 165 cases are appointed to be tried by full court without jury; 24 by a full court with jury; and 13 by a single judge and jury, these latter items including cases not yet set down for trial. The petitions for judicial separation during the time covered by the return, were 105 in number; 8 presented by the husband, and all the rest by the wife. In 28 cases the petition was decreed; in 3 it was refused; 15 cases were undefended; in 21 the petitioner was examined; 6 cases are now set down for trial; 11 cases were appointed to be tried before judge ordinary and jury; 32 before judge ordinary alone.

EXTRAORDINARY SUICIDE.—A gentleman, said to be the Spanish consul for Australia, shot himself dead in Blenheim Park last week. Among the letters found on his person, was one to the Duke of Marlborough, begging that his Grace would pardon him for selecting his park as the place in which to end his life: observes that he has a feeling, which may be a childish one, which revolts at his dying in cultivated fields, where cottagers are, and roads cross, and signs of life exist; therefore he has selected Blenheim Park for this purpose, and prays that the Duke will cause him to be buried at the spot where he falls, and cause a cross to be put up to note the place, according to the Spanish custom. He states, further, in his letter, that he had been to see Blenheim Palace, hoping that a sight of the noble paintings would do him good; but it was of no avail. To the landlady of the Bear Hotel he gives directions as to certain property in her custody, ordering certain debts to be paid, and the remainder to be sent to his wife in Spain.

THE VICTORIA BRIDGE, MONTREAL.—The central and longest tube of this bridge (350 feet in length) was successfully fixed in its place on the 26th of March. From the commencement of the operation until its completion, it only occupied eight weeks. The scaffolding was built on the ice, in the expectation that it would last firm until about the middle of the present month. But, early in March, the usual indications of approaching spring manifested themselves. The consequence was, it was necessary to work night and day from that time until the tube was actually placed in position. "A miss is as good as a mile," and so it proved in this case, for on the morning after it was placed, the ice began to "shove," carrying away that portion of the scaffolding which it was known would disappear with it. Had the breaking up taken place two days earlier, not only would the scaffolding have been carried away, but the tube itself would have found its resting-place at the bottom of the St. Lawrence, instead of being, as it now is, sixty feet above its surface. The excitement at Montreal during the 25th and 26th of March was intense: thousands of persons lined the banks of the river, in the belief that the ice would shove, and sweep scaffolding and tube away.

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